VOL. XXV, No. 1 JULY, 1927 No. 9

HARVARD COLLEGE

THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY

PUBLISHED BY
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The Theosophical Quarterly

Subscription price, $1.00 per annum; single copies 25 cents
Published by The Theosophical Society
at 64 Washington Mews, New York, N. Y.
July; October; January; April
Address all communications to P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York

In Europe, single copies may be obtained from and subscriptions may be sent to John M. Watkins, 21 Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road, London, W. C. 2, England; or to Mr. E. H. Lincoln, 4 Sunningdale Avenue, Walker, Newcastle-on-Tyne, England, from whom all back numbers may be obtained. Annual subscription price, 6s., postpaid.

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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

Entered as second-class matter September 5, 1923, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

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HARVARD COLLEGE
JUL 5 1927

NOTES AND COMMENTS

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The Theosophical Society, as such, is not responsible for any opinion or declaration in this magazine, by whomsoever expressed, unless contained in an official document.

The Ladder of Consciousness

MANY Orientalists of a by-gone day, misled, perhaps, by learned but undiscerning Southern Buddhists, held that Nirvana, the consummation of the Buddha's path, meant annihilation of consciousness, annihilation of being, itself. Robert Childers, whose Pali Dictionary is still the foundation stone of our knowledge of the sacred language of Buddhism, states that view without reservation, and many scholars followed his lead.

This complete failure to understand is due, in a considerable degree, to a misapprehension of the Buddha's purpose, when he declares that "Self, Atta, has no reality," Atta being the Pali equivalent of the Sanskrit, Atma; and to a like misunderstanding of the states of consciousness which the Buddha describes, as leading up to Nirvana. To show that the consciousness of one approaching Buddhahood, and therefore drawing near to Nirvana, far from being negative, is intensely positive, we may quote a native gloss on that part of the Jataka, which describes the conditions under which the aspiration for Buddhahood may be successfully entertained:

"He who, if all within the rim of the world were to become water, would be ready to swim across it with his own arms, and to reach the further shore, he is the one to attain to Buddhahood; or, if all within the rim of the world were a jungle of bamboo, would be ready to break his way through it, and to reach the further side, he is the one to attain to Buddhahood; or, if all within the rim of the world were a floor of close-set spear points, would be ready to tread them, and to go afoot to the further side, he is the one to attain to Buddhahood; or, if all within the rim of the world were live embers, would be ready to step on them, and so to pass over, he is the one to attain to Buddhahood; then, but not otherwise, will his purpose succeed."

We owe this fine passage to Henry Clarke Warren, who, more intuitive than the earlier Orientalists, interprets Nirvana as "extinction of desire," and wisely adds: "I conceive that Nirvana can only be properly under-

stood by a tolerably thorough comprehension of the philosophy of which it is the climax" (*Buddhism in Translations*, page 284). It is certain that the quality of supreme determination described in the passage quoted could not conceivably be the prelude of extinction; but this quality is entirely in harmony with the Theosophical understanding of a Master, and of that Master of Masters, whom we know as Siddhartha the Compassionate.

It is clear that the Atta of the Pali scriptures is not the Parama-Atma of the great Upanishads, but is the lower self of the false personality; and that the purpose of the Buddha, when he teaches in detail the unreality of Atta, is, to help the disciple, or, perhaps, we may almost say, to compel the disciple, to that abandonment of self, which is the first step on the path of wisdom and attainment. That this abandonment of self leads, not to extinction, but to real being, will become abundantly clear, when we come to the Buddha's description of the states of consciousness which follow the abandonment of self. This description forms the conclusion of the *Maha-Nidana-Suttanta*, the first part of which has already been translated, under the title, "The Chain of Causation."

The Buddha begins the work of dissipating the disciple's belief in the reality of the false self by analyzing all the possible forms which that belief can take, and showing that they are untenable:

"In how many ways, Ananda, do they make declarations concerning the self?

"Either maintaining, Ananda, that the self has form and is limited, one declares, 'My self has form and is limited'; or maintaining, Ananda, that the self has form and is unending, one declares, 'My self has form and is unending'; or maintaining, Ananda, that the self has no form and is limited, one declares, 'My self has no form and is limited'; or maintaining, Ananda, that the self has no form and is unending, one declares, 'My self has no form and is unending.'

"In this way, Ananda, he who maintains and declares that the self has form and is limited, either maintains and declares that in this present life the self has form and is limited, or maintains and declares that in a future life the self has form and is limited, or his thought is, 'Since it is not like that, I shall build it over like that.' This being so, Ananda, enough has been said of the thought that the self has form and is limited.

"In the same way, Ananda, he who maintains and declares that the self has form and is unending, either maintains and declares that in this present life the self has form and is unending, or maintains and declares that in a future life the self has form and is unending, or his thought is, 'Since it is not like that, I shall build it over like that.' This being so, Ananda, enough has been said of the thought that the self has form and is unending.

"In the same way, Ananda, he who maintains and declares that the self has no form and is limited, either maintains and declares that in this present life the self has no form and is limited, or maintains and declares that in a future life the self has no form and is limited, or his thought is, 'Since it is

not like that, I shall build it over like that.' This being so, Ananda, enough has been said of the thought that the self has no form and is limited.

"In the same way, Ananda, he who maintains and declares that the self has no form and is unending, either maintains and declares that in this present life the self has no form and is unending, or maintains and declares that in a future life the self has no form and is unending, or his thought is, 'Since it is not like that, I shall build it over like that.' This being so, Ananda, enough has been said of the thought that the self has no form and is unending.

"In so many ways, Ananda, do they make declarations concerning the self."

All this may seem to us rather abstract and remote. We are evidently concerned, not with the impulses of selfishness, but with rather tenuous and metaphysical theories of the self. But it must be remembered that the disciples, for whom this teaching is designed, have already made a practical renunciation of the impulses of desire, leaving the household life for the homeless life, and surrendering all personal possessions; and, further, that other teachings of the Buddha are directly aimed at the impulses of desire. We are here, in fact, concerned with something more abstract, and more deep-rooted: with those thoughts of self, that cherishing of the thought of self, from which the impulses of selfishness may so easily rise again, through the operation of that chain of causation which has already been detailed. We are not now concerned with cutting away the leaves or lopping off the branches of selfishness; our purpose is, to destroy the seeds. Through right thinking, the seeds of wrong thinking are to be annihilated.

One may think of the self, says the Buddha, in a great many ways; but they all come down to this: the self may be thought of either as having form, or as not having form; the self may be thought of either as being limited in time, or as being unending.

Most of us probably think of the self, the imagined personality, as a replica of the body, but a very important replica. When we sign our names, we have, half-consciously, some such picture of the outward, bodily self in mind. So we think of the self as having form. Then again people are divided into those who believe that this self will definitely end at death, and those who believe that this identical self will continue in another world. They hardly stop to inquire which of the almost innumerable selves of a lifetime will thus be perpetuated: the self of childhood, the self of youth, or of maturity. Perhaps they have in view an eclectic self, made up of the best qualities of all three; thus, perhaps, dimly foreshadowing the selective process of Devachan, or Devaloka, as the Pali books call it. But, so far as we are concerned, they think of the self as having form, and as being either limited to the present life, or to be continued in a future life.

But there are those of more abstract bent, who are inclined to think that form belongs to the outer body, but not to the self. These again either believe, or do not believe, in survival. So we have the Buddha's four alternatives, which really cover all possible permutations and combinations of our imaginings of the self. But there is a further possibility. There are those whose

purpose is, to build up a self that shall possess such and such qualities; a purpose that is still self-centred and self-seeking; therefore to be swept aside with the same unflinching vigour. The Buddha's purpose is, to uproot the seed of that subtle kind of selfishness, which "renounces" self in this world with the definite purpose of achieving something for self in a future world; the love of reward, carefully disguised and pushed just over the rim of the horizon. The Buddha is determined to make an end of self-seeking, once for all; to attain to that revulsion from the desire of personal reward, whether in this world, or in another world, which Shankara Acharya describes as the Second Qualification. The vessel of being must be chemically clean, before the water of life is poured into it from above.

The paragraphs which follow in the Pali text remind us that the men of the Buddha's day and land were immeasurably more metaphysical, more argumentative also, than those of our day and generation. On the one hand, there were the class of thinkers, whom the Buddha elsewhere details and describes with delightful humour, who spent their lives in making affirmations concerning life and being, and spinning endless webs of argument in support of these affirmations. On the other hand, there were those equally ingenious and disputatious persons who spent their lives controverting and denying whatever the first class affirmed. The wrangling went on unceasingly. Both were wasting golden hours that should have been given to spiritual living, not to arguments concerning life.

So it comes that, having exhausted the possible combinations of thought on the affirmative side, the Buddha deems it expedient to go at equal length into the possible combinations on the negative side, as follows:

"And, further, Ananda, when no declaration is made concerning the self, in how many ways is no declaration made?" And, answering his own question, the great Master goes over the whole ground again, with the simple addition of a negative at each point. The point seems to be that, if men are plunged in disputatious argument, it does not greatly matter which view they are supporting; it is all waste of time and vanity.

Then we come to something closer to the thinking of our own times. The thought of self, of personality, may be based on feeling and emotion, rather than abstract thinking. Instead of Descartes's "I think, therefore I am," we may have "I feel, therefore I am." The Buddha sets himself to dissipate the emotional cloud, just as he has dissipated the mental cloud, by the simple and effective process of pulling it to pieces, and showing that it has no inherent unity, no essential "selfhood":

"And considering the self, Ananda, in how many ways does one consider the self? As feeling, verily, Ananda, he considers the self. 'My self is feeling,' he says. Or, 'My self is not feeling, my self is devoid of feeling.' Thus, Ananda, one perceives the self. Or he says, 'Neither is my self feeling, nor is it devoid of feeling; my self feels, feeling is one of its activities.' So, Ananda, considering the self, does one consider the self.

"In such a case, Ananda, when anyone says, 'My self is feeling,' one should

say to him, 'My dear Sir, there are three kinds of feeling: pleasant feeling, painful feeling, and feeling neither painful nor pleasant. As which of these three kinds of feeling do you perceive your self?'

"At the time, Ananda, when one feels pleasant feeling, at that time he does not feel painful feeling, nor feeling that is neither painful nor pleasant, while he is feeling pleasant feeling. At the time, Ananda, when one feels painful feeling, at that time he does not feel pleasant feeling, nor feeling that is neither pleasant nor painful, while he is feeling painful feeling. At the time, Ananda, when one feels feeling that is neither painful nor pleasant, at that time he does not feel pleasant feeling, nor feeling that is painful, while he is feeling neither pleasant nor painful feeling.

"Moreover, Ananda, pleasant feeling is unenduring, it is a composite, proceeding from antecedent causes, tending to dissipate, tending to pass away, tending to revulsion, tending to cease. Further, Ananda, painful feeling is unenduring, it is a composite, proceeding from antecedent causes, tending to dissipate, tending to pass away, tending to revulsion, tending to cease. Further, Ananda, feeling that is neither painful nor pleasant is unenduring, it is a composite, proceeding from antecedent causes, tending to dissipate, tending to pass away, tending to revulsion, tending to cease.

"If, when one is feeling a pleasant feeling, he thinks, 'This is my self,' then, when that pleasant feeling ceases, he thinks, 'My self has passed away.' If, when one is feeling a painful feeling, he thinks 'This is my self,' then, when that painful feeling ceases, he thinks, 'My self has passed away.' If, when one is feeling a feeling that is neither painful nor pleasant, he thinks, 'This is my self,' then, when that feeling neither painful nor pleasant ceases, he thinks, 'My self has passed away.'

"So it is evident that he who thinks, 'My self is feeling,' regards as self something that even here, in this present world, is unenduring, subject to pleasure and pain, having a beginning, and passing away. Therefore, Ananda, the view that 'My self is feeling' is, for this reason, not to be tolerated.

"Likewise, Ananda, when anyone says, 'My self is not feeling, my self is devoid of feeling,' one should say to him, 'My dear Sir, when there is no feeling at all, can one then say, "I am"?'"

"No, Lord!"

"Therefore, Ananda, the view that 'My self is not feeling, my self is devoid of feeling,' is, for this reason, not to be tolerated.

"Likewise, Ananda, when anyone says, 'Neither is my self feeling, nor is it devoid of feeling; my self feels, feeling is one of its activities,' one should say to him, 'My dear Sir, supposing that feeling of every sort, in every way, should cease altogether, without leaving a trace, could one then say, "This I am"?'"

"No, Lord!"

"Therefore, Ananda, the view that 'Neither is my self feeling, nor is it devoid of feeling; my self feels, feeling is one of its activities,' is, for this reason, not to be tolerated."

So far, so good. It is to be supposed that, by thoroughly digesting this teaching, by following, again and again, in his own mind, the steps of the Buddha's analysis of the outer, false personality, the disciple has thoroughly convinced his mind and understanding of the truth that the elements of true selfhood are not present in that personality. The self of the false personality has been utterly dissolved. What happens then? Is the result blankness and negation? Let us take first the Buddha's answer:

"Then, Ananda, when a disciple no longer considers his self to be feeling, nor to be devoid of feeling, nor says, 'My self feels, feeling is one of its activities,' ceasing to consider thus, he no longer clings to anything in the world; no longer clinging, he trembles not; trembling not, he attains to liberation, recognizing that the cause of rebirth has been destroyed, the discipline has been fulfilled, what was to be done has been done, this condition of bondage is ended.

"Then, Ananda, when the heart of that disciple is thus set free, if anyone should say, 'He maintains that after death the Tathagata is,' that would be meaningless; or if anyone should say, 'He maintains that after death the Tathagata is not,' that would be meaningless; or if anyone should say, 'He maintains that after death the Tathagata both is and is not,' that would be meaningless; or if anyone should say, 'He maintains that after death the Tathagata neither is nor is not,' that would be meaningless.

"What is the cause of this? So far, Ananda, as there is verbal expression, so far as there is a method of verbal expression, so far as there is explanation, so far as there is a method of explanation, so far as there is declaration, so far as there is a method of declaration, so far as there is reasoning, so far as is the sphere of reasoning, so far as there are rites and ceremonies, so far as rites and ceremonies are performed, the disciple, completely knowing them, is liberated from them; but, that the disciple, completely knowing them, and liberated from them, no longer knows nor sees, to say this would be meaningless."

The disciple has passed beyond the forms of reasoning. He has realized that "the end of the man who endeavours to live by thought alone is that he dwells in phantasies." He has found the path, not of reasoning, but of life; "from the hour when he first tastes the reality of living, he forgets more and more his individual self; no longer does he care to defend or feed it. Yet when he is thus indifferent to its welfare the individual self grows more stalwart and robust, like the prairie grass and the trees of untrodden forests. It is a matter of indifference to him whether this is so or not. Only, if it is so, he has a fine instrument ready to his hand. And in due proportion to the completeness of his indifference to it is the strength and beauty of his personal self." *Through the Gates of Gold*, from which these two passages are taken, is, perhaps, the best commentary on the part of the Buddha's teaching that we are considering. The Master goes on to describe the ascending planes or degrees of consciousness:

"Seven, Ananda, are the stages of cognition, and two abodes. Which are the seven?

"There are, Ananda, beings diverse in body, diverse in intelligence, that is to say, men, some of the bright powers, some of those undergoing purification. This is the first stage of cognition.

"There are, Ananda, beings diverse in body, uniform in intelligence, that is to say, bright powers possessing celestial bodies, reborn in the first degree. This is the second stage of cognition.

"There are, Ananda, beings uniform in body, diverse in intelligence, that is to say, the bright powers called the radiant. This is the third stage of cognition.

"There are, Ananda, beings uniform in body, uniform in intelligence, that is to say, the bright powers called the lustrous. This is the fourth stage of cognition.

"There are, Ananda, beings who have altogether passed beyond the cognition of form, who have transcended the cognition of separateness, whose perception no longer dwells on the cognition of diversity, who, with the perception that 'the radiant ether is infinite,' have attained to the dwelling place of the infinite radiant ether. This is the fifth stage of cognition.

"There are, Ananda, beings who have altogether transcended the dwelling place of the infinite radiant ether, who, with the perception that 'perceiving consciousness is infinite,' have attained to the dwelling place of perceiving consciousness. This is the sixth stage of cognition.

"There are, Ananda, beings who have altogether transcended the dwelling place of perceiving consciousness, who have attained to the perception that 'Nothing objective exists,' attaining the dwelling place beyond objective being. This is the seventh stage of cognition.

"Then the abode in which there is no consciousness of separation, and the second abode, where there is neither consciousness nor non-consciousness of separation."

While we cannot be certain of all the fine shades of meaning and of difference in this description of stages of cognition, it is quite clear that we are concerned with seven ascending stages, beginning with the ordinary consciousness of human life; that the first four of the seven are characterized by the presence of form, while the last three are above form, above that kind of limitation which expresses itself in form; and, further, that there are two more abstract degrees beyond the seven. This is in complete conformity with what we have learned, regarding the seven planes, divided into a lower quaternary and a higher triad, with something higher and more universal beyond.

We may further conjecture that the three stages which immediately follow the stage which includes mankind, while they may include different kinds of ethereal or angelic beings, also represent three degrees through which the disciple passes, when he has risen above the stage of "those who are undergoing purification." This would harmonize well with the description of the second stage, as containing those who have been "reborn in the first degree."

So we may consider that the three following stages, the fifth, sixth and

seventh, are degrees of development and consciousness in what has been called the causal body, "which is no body, either objective or subjective," as *The Theosophical Glossary* says, adding that it corresponds with Buddhi in conjunction with Manas. This would imply individuality above the limitation of form, and would thus agree with the Buddha's description of these three stages.

As to the seventh stage, above "the dwelling place of perceiving consciousness," we may find a simple explanation in the words of one of the Upanishads: "Where there is duality, there one sees another, one hears another, one knows another; but where all has become Self, Atma, by what and whom would one see, by what and whom would one hear, by what and whom would one know? By what would one know Him, whereby one knows the All? By what would one know the Knower?"

Concerning the two "abodes" which are above this seventh stage, it is hardly profitable to speculate; we are not yet in a position to comprehend Nirvana and Para-Nirvana.

One matter remains to be cleared up. There is the possibility that the disciple might be allured by one or other of the ascending stages, and might wish to halt there, rather than continue the arduous uphill journey. To this possibility the Buddha turns:

"Then, Ananda, concerning the first stage of cognition, where there are beings diverse in body, diverse in intelligence, that is to say, men, some of the bright powers, some of those undergoing purification,—he, Ananda, who understands it, understands its rising, understands its setting, understands its pleasure, understands its danger, understands the way of passing beyond it, is it possible that he should be allured and enthralled by it?"

"No, Lord!"

For each of the seven stages the Buddha passes through the same thoughts, as also for the two abodes, leading us, perhaps, to the supreme renunciation of Nirvana, the great trial and victory of a Master. So, for each stage, for each abode, there is a renunciation, a liberation, leading to something higher, nobler, more divine:

"When, Ananda, a disciple has mastered these eight liberations in their order, has mastered them in reverse order, has mastered them both in order and in reverse order, so that, as he may desire, when he may desire, so long as he may desire, he may enter, or rise above, each one of them, when he is purified of all impurity, when he knows and realizes liberation of heart, liberation of intelligence, in doctrine and discipline, such a disciple, Ananda, is said to be liberated in both ways; and than this liberation, Ananda, no liberation is higher or more excellent."

Thus spoke the Master. Full of joy, the noble Ananda rejoiced in the Master's words.

FRAGMENTS

The Son of God goes forth to War

A LONG roll of drums; the bugles singing; the tread of marching men. What is this? you say to me. Who are these? Where are they marching?

They go to war, I answer.

War, you say, war, when we at last have peace! War, when our sons gave their lives by millions on the blood-soaked fields of France and Belgium that there should never again be war. War, when men surrendered their souls, and are selling them daily, for peace—peace at any price, even at that high price!

Peace, I say,—and the word chokes me: No, it is war, unending war, so long as such peace-visions remain, so long as souls are numbed by them, or sold in droves into the hands of death.

These men are marching to that war. Beyond there, the standard of the Great Dragon looms, and the horizon is black with the swarms who rally to it—the spawn and output of Hell, the legions of the Black Lodge. These men go to push them back a foot or two, for they are marching into a new year. They are called the Battalion of Death, for they give their lives to this Cause. They cannot surrender, no one of them is ever taken prisoner,—they win, or die. A Warrior leads them, peerless in all that makes a warrior, who routed the hosts of Darkness singlehanded years ago, and whose initial victory makes possible the salvation of this world. Else were there no war to-day, but the deadly blank of uttermost destruction.

As they pass, see where the Heavenly Host, St. Michael in command, stand gravely at the salute. Do you not hear *their* bugles singing also, and mark the long streaks of light across the sky, where divine sentinels watch and flash the signals—the air corps of angelic combatants.

Volunteers: who will volunteer! Who will not volunteer, for who can resist the appeal of such a high endeavour. Your hearts must burn within you, O sons of Myalba, burn to give all or die. When we look in that Leader's face, must we not follow him? There is a magnet to draw out all your powers, downing the base and craven thing within, which whines and trembles and protests.

Leave thy fair dreams and fancies of to-day. Pick up thy broken sword and hie thee forth. On this great battle-field now prove thy worth. Forget thyself: behold, the former things are passed away.

CAVÉ.

THEOSOPHY[1]

THE purpose of The Theosophical Society is to keep alive the spiritual intuitions of mankind. Since we are here this afternoon as guests of the New York Branch of The Theosophical Society, it is proper that we should know what our purpose is, a purpose which each one of us, in the measure of his willingness, may share. What are the spiritual intuitions of mankind? On what do they rest? What do they seek as their ideal and goal? We reply that the goal is supremely simple; the goal is Eternal Being, one and undivided. Eternal Being is the foundation of all true religions, all true philosophies. The great founders of religions, the greatest prophets, the greatest seers have been great precisely because they perceived Eternal Being, and their essential identity with Eternal Being. This essential identity is the key to all that is splendid in human life, for truly to perceive Eternal Being is to become Eternal Being. The truth of Eternal Being is so simple that it needs no declaration. It stands of itself. Eternal Being is, and, because Eternal Being is, we are. The prophets and seers, all the great among the sons of men, gained their glimpse of Eternal Being, a glimpse which meant a beginning of assimilation, or, to speak more truly, a recognition of identity with Eternal Being, one and undivided. We are Eternal Being, for there is nothing else for us to be. As the seers and prophets gained this glimpse, they were so won by the wonder and splendour of the vision, that of necessity they dedicated their lives to the worship, the recognition of Eternal Being; obedience to it, assimilation with it. They began to be at one with eternal life. And, since that Being contains, among its many powers, its many facets, the power of manifestation—the expression of its hidden treasures, a power of which we see, at this time of year, a beautiful symbol, in the new leaves and blossoms of the trees and the plants of the earth, so delicately and irresistibly manifested year by year—in virtue of this inherent power, this beautiful necessity of manifestation, the seers and sages, when they had recognized their oneness with Everlasting Being, inevitably expressed that oneness and made it manifest, first, in a life completely conformed with the Divine Being; secondly, in teaching, in the enunciation of the truth regarding Eternal Being; and also in teaching of a more d rect kind, through the contagion of their insight and their action, because Eternal Being is as much action as insight. It is power, energy, as much as consciousness and wisdom. Therefore, since those great Masters of wisdom were all in essence one, because all are facets of the one Eternal Life, all expressing that Life, for that reason, their teaching, however separated in time, to whatever nation it may have been given, is fundamentally the same.

[1] From stenographic notes of a lecture by Charles Johnston, on May 1st, 1927, on the occasion of the Convention of The Theosophical Society.

If it be our purpose, the purpose of The Theosophical Society, to awaken and keep alive the spiritual intuitions of mankind, we shall be working for the fulfilment of that purpose if we can show this one fundamental spiritual reality underlying, inspiring, all religions and all religious philosophies. The realization of the unity of all religious truth should rejoice the heart of every man of good will. If they be not hopelessly narrow, penned in within the limits of sectarian prejudice, all who aspire and believe should rejoice beyond measure to find that their truth is an aspect of an infinite, universal Truth. We can hardly conceive a smaller and more contemptible trait in human nature than the desire to magnify one's own creed by attacking and denying the truth of others. But, if there be magnanimity, love of truth for the sake of truth, then one can conceive that great joy may come to the heart of every seeker, should he realize the superb fact that the truth before which he bows in reverence, is also the fundamental Truth in all the religions of mankind. This is one of the joys by which we, as lovers of the Truth, are rewarded. In every form of genuine religion, and even in many limitations of religion, something of that everlasting radiance shines.

The motto of our Society, and its declared objects, are aspects of that one Truth. In our motto, "There is no Religion higher than Truth," we affirm the oneness of Truth in all religions. Our motto is profound in its significance. Some light may be shed, perhaps, on the difference between the Oriental and the Western mind, if we translate into Sanskrit the famous sentence, "What is truth?" We shall discover that the Oriental tongue has developed in harmony with universal being. For, if the question, "What is truth?" be asked in Sanskrit, it is already answered: Truth is that which depends on, or belongs to, Eternal Being. So also the word "religion" in our motto has its deep significance, more fully revealed in the original Sanskrit of the motto. The word comes from a root meaning "hold." So there is no "hold" better than reality. There is no obligation stronger than that which rests upon Eternal Being. There is no religion higher than the recognition of Eternal Being. So our motto expresses the fundamental truth: Being upholds itself; Being stands.

Then the first object of our Society, to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, caste, colour or sex. If it be true, as the great Masters of wisdom have shown by their experience, that Eternal Being is the one reality in the universe, and that we are facets of the diamond, each one "an inlet to the same, and to all of the same," then it is most certain that, in their essential nature, all human beings are one; not merely similar, not simply like each other, but, in the heart of Being, one. The diamond is not divided by the facets; it remains one; and, without the diamond, the facets have absolutely no existence. On the diamond, the facets have a relative reality. They are there, and we are those facets; each one of us, if we will, an entry not into a part, not into one side of Being, but, as Emerson says, into all of the same. But there is a truth that must be borne in mind when we speak of Universal Brotherhood; it has

already been suggested in speaking of the great Masters of religious and spiritual history, and in saying that they conform to Eternal Being: conforming to reality, to truth, to beauty, to that quality which we can best describe as the beauty of holiness. Without this conformity, this response of complete obedience and assimilation, we do not really exist. We are then facets detached from the diamond. Therefore it follows that mankind begins to be real, begins really to be, only through recognition of that splendid spiritual Being, and through the effort, following recognition, to make it real; not an abstraction or a theory, but a daily, hourly reality, entering a man to the tips of his fingers. Through realization we become real, through realization of spiritual Being. So that we may divide mankind into three great groups: first, those who have realized Eternal Being, the great Masters of wisdom; second, those who are seeking to realize Eternal Being; and, lastly, those who, so far as Eternal Being is concerned, are blind, deaf, dumb; those who at some later time may come into existence, but cannot yet be said really to exist. Therefore we have this formulation of our principle: to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of humanity; a nucleus to begin with, because we recognize that real humanity comes slowly into existence through perception of spiritual Being, through the effort to become one with that Being; or, to speak more truly, to realize our oneness with Being, since it is a oneness which, potentially, has been from everlasting.

We have already considered the second object of The Theosophical Society, which is the comparative study of religions, philosophies, science and ethics; the purpose of our search being to recognize in them partial revelations of this same spiritual Life, whose properties are truth, beauty, holiness. Even though much of modern science be one-sided, a narrowly limited view, a flattened-out truth, truth without Being, eternity without immortality, so that some scientists may be said to dwell in a two-dimensional universe,—nevertheless they are genuinely devoted to truth, honest and sincere in their search for truth; in that degree, they are votaries of Eternal Being, whose breath is truth. We study ethics also, the search for right conduct. What, according to our fundamental principle, will be right conduct? Surely it will be that conduct which is in conformity with spiritual Being. How are we to discover what it is? We must seek to learn it from the Masters of wisdom who are conformed to spiritual Being. While the records of Masters and their teachings may belong to a distant past, five or ten thousand years ago, we cannot think of a Master as being in the past. From the standpoint of students of Theosophy, there can be no dead Masters. They can hardly even be said to have risen from the dead, because they are eternally alive, since they have become one with eternal spiritual Being. They are as much here, now, as they were, let us say, in the valley of the Ganges thirty-five centuries ago. The Masters of wisdom must be here, since they are one with Being, and Being is here. So we may seek their teachings first in the historical records, the great Scriptures. Then, if we be faithful, persistent, we may one day be able to seek more directly, and to find; and, when we shall

have found, we shall have a true system of ethics, of conduct, because we shall have found the system which is in conformity with eternal spiritual reality. So much, concerning our second object.

We have considered Eternal Being as reality, beauty, truth, holiness. Let us turn now to another aspect of Being, another facet, another way of looking at Eternal Being: namely, Eternal Being as harmony, harmony making for perfection. To begin with simple illustrations: the principle of harmony, in physics, is equilibrium, the restoration of balance; that, in virtue of which the great billows of the ocean, after they have risen mountain high, sink down again to a level mirror; that which dictates that the planets, though they may sway from the normal of their orbits, nevertheless sway back again, in the eternal self-adjustment of the solar system. Going deeper, we may say that harmony means justice, but justice which is also mercy; for we can conceive of a justice literally rigid, which would therefore be unjust: a justice which would fall short of perfect justice. But the harmony of Eternal Being is at once perfect justice and perfect mercy. So we find this aspect of Eternal Being: namely, harmony, making for perfection, the principle of equilibrium, of balance restored, and therefore the principle of alternation. It is illustrated perpetually before our eyes, in the change from spring to summer, to autumn, to winter, each with its pageantry of beauty and delight; or the change from morning to noon, from noon to evening and night, each perfect in beauty; and likewise in our human destiny, the progression from birth to maturity, to death, to the paradise between death and rebirth, and so back again to birth; a restoration of balance, equilibrium, harmony.

If we go back again to our starting point: mankind as facets of the diamond, but as yet unconscious facets; mankind still asleep, which is the condition of the vast majority—mankind not yet even beginning to be conscious of fundamental spiritual unity with Eternal Being—we must quite clearly see that, if the goal be omniscience, omnipotence, perfection of beauty and holiness, then there is a long, long journey yet to travel, a distance that will not be covered in a day, or the day of a single life. Therefore we say that our principle of harmony, a justice that shall be also mercy, demands for each individual, for each still unburnished facet of the diamond, the time to make that journey, a sufficient opportunity, a continuity of life. The great work takes time, much time. Perhaps, if the ultimate truth be told, the soul spins time as it goes along, just as the spider spins his web; and what we call time is simply the expression of the slowness of the soul, in the process of growth, of realization, of awakening. But the point is, that there is this long development, this immense journey, demanding continuity of being. Yet not an unbroken journey; since these souls of men are little, and easily wearied, one can see that the quality of mercy cannot require that the great journey be made in a single day. There must be, and there are, periods of rest. Rest, and something more. When the man, overtaken by the night, has laid his weary head on the bosom of mother earth, when his outward vesture has returned to its source, he needs rest, rest for the weary; but he needs something

more. What provision has the great principle of harmony made for his restoration while he sleeps?

But let us go back for a moment to consider the source of this doctrine of continuity of life, of a long succession of lives, each one with a new gift of hope, of power, of opportunity. It would be quite possible for a logical mind to formulate the doctrine of many births. It is, indeed, the fact that, when an intuitional and logical mind once receives this thought, and sees how many enigmas of life it resolves, how many locked doors it opens, such a mind may support the doctrine by pure logical reasoning. The doctrine is eminently reasonable; yet one is inclined to believe that it was not arrived at by reasoning. That is not the light in which the great Scriptures of the world present it to us. Take one of the old Scriptures of India, which tells of the Master Krishna, who appeals to many of us because he is a warrior, teaching on the battle field as the armies are ready to clash, appealing to us because human life is the field of battle and we are of the army. Krishna does not put forward the teaching of reincarnation or rebirth, the succession of births, as a speculation, or the result of close logic. In the beginning of the fourth book of the *Bhagavad Gita*, he says, "I taught this doctrine to the lord of the Solar race, and to Ikshvaku." Arjuna, whom he addresses, is naturally astonished, saying: "Later was thy birth, O noble one, earlier the birth of the Solar lord. How then may I understand this, that thou hast declared it in the beginning?" Then Krishna gives the answer that is the fundamental revelation of how this knowledge comes into the world: "Many are my past births and thine also, Arjuna; I know them all, but thou knowest them not." Krishna did not, therefore, present the admirably logical teaching of successive births as the result of logic. He did not say, "Because there are tendencies in us at our birth, definite directions of character which must have had antecedent causes, therefore they must have been generated in an antecedent life." Nor did he say, "Look at these poor people, swept into the widespread net of death; far from being perfect and complete, they have not even begun; of necessity they must have new lives, new opportunities." This is sound logic, but it is not what Krishna said. What Krishna said was, "My past births I remember." Whoever is familiar with the Gospel according to Saint John must be struck with the similarity of this passage with a text that may cause a good deal of bewilderment to some of those who read it,—where the Master Christ says, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." Exactly as Arjuna replied to Krishna, those who heard the Master Christ inquired of him, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" And again, in complete harmony with Krishna's answer, Christ says, "Before Abraham was I am." These words, "I am," are immensely striking. He does not say, "I was," he says, "I am." Having become one with the eternal Life, being himself that eternal Life, or, as John says, the Logos made flesh, and so living in the eternal present, he cannot say, "I was." For eternal life, there is no past. "Before Abraham was, I am," whether in ancient Egypt, or wherever it may be. Again, the same

Master uses the same striking word when he is commissioning his disciples, "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age." So in this, as in all else, we find that a Master of wisdom speaks in conformity with Eternal Being, whether those who heard and recorded his words, understood or fell short of understanding. There is the record, the hallmark of the Master of wisdom.

To go back to the seventh century before Christ, we find two eminent witnesses to the same teaching: Gautama Buddha, or, as he is personally named, Prince Siddhartha, "he who has attained his goal." Again and again he affirms his memory, his knowledge, of his previous lives. There is, among these, a stirring record of the steps up which he climbed to that supreme eminence of divine-human life which he represents,—for we do not say "represented." As Emerson said, "Jesus and Paul are very well alive," so we may say that Prince Siddhartha is very well alive. He relates stories of his earlier lives; and one of the striking forms of his teaching is this: when he finds a bitter problem, sore and hard to solve, he seeks to show the sufferers how their painful situation was generated by their own actions in some earlier life; a life which, though to them it is past, is present and plainly visible to him.

A great Master contemporary with him, Pythagoras, also said, "I remember." He is the fountain head of the teaching of reincarnation in the Western world, or, rather the Græco-Roman civilization. For, as Julius Cæsar tells us, it existed among the Gauls in Northern Europe, in all likelihood for centuries. Pythagoras is the source of the teaching in that late afternoon of the Græco-Roman world, which is all that we yet know of it, the last few centuries before our era, as he is also the beginning of Western philosophy, and the creator of that superb word, philosophy. There is an impressive rendering of the word in our Theosophical tradition. We hold that philosophy means more than the love of wisdom; it means the wisdom of love; the wisdom which comes from love of Divine Being, and of all that is in harmony with Divine Being: the wisdom of love. So Pythagoras is the head and source of our Western philosophy and our Western mathematics, both of which, it is practically certain, he received from the initiates of ancient Egypt, because it is recorded that he had been initiated in Egypt, and also, very probably, in India. But he did not say, "In India I heard of reincarnation, and I think it may be true," or, "In Egypt they taught me about successive lives." What Pythagoras said was, "I remember."

So four witnesses have been cited. It is worth considering where, if we take all the records of mankind, we could find four witnesses of equal eminence to testify to anything; and all four make the same statement, "I remember." Therefore our understanding of this law of reincarnation, of a series of lives, is not derived from logic, even though it be eminently defensible by logic. It is not the result of speculation, even though it be a very sane speculation, for nothing saner has ever been proposed, nor any better solution of the problems, entanglements and obscurities of human life. No, it is knowledge, the

knowledge of those who remember, the immediate memory of the great men who have borne testimony, the sanest men in all human history, men recognized by tens of thousands, by tens of millions, as masters of sanity, masters of right thinking, masters of right action, masters of justice, masters of mercy. These are the witnesses, or they are among the witnesses.

Further, they tell us something of the paradise of rest, between death and rebirth, which we were considering a little while ago, holding that it is a paradise of rest for the weary, rest and something more. There is, in each one of us, a higher nature, which already mirrors and exemplifies Spiritual Being, the point at which the facet and the diamond are one; that in us which looks into the heart of the infinite jewel. There are also the middle nature, and the lower nature; the latter in two senses. First, there is the lower nature which belongs to the biological world, the animal body, with its functions and its members. Perhaps it might better be called, not lower—because there is nothing essentially low about it—but the outer nature. But there is a lower nature to which that word ought to be attached, as a moral stigma: the nature of selfishness, brutality, cruelty, sensuality. I doubt if there be a human being who will not, in the abstract at least, brand these things as evil, and admit that they play a considerable part in human life. Then, to go back, there is the middle nature, in which, according as it is limpid or turbid, there are reflected the influences from above or from below, or much of both. Our ordinary states of mind, if we watch them for an hour or two, entertain this from above, that from below, mingled good and evil. The middle nature is the corridor, the place of meeting.

Take any ordinary human life, and you will see that there have been in it many gleams of light, or of longing for the light, touches of beauty, aspirations after truth, breathings of the spirit of holiness, hopes for high attainment, or shadows of hope. But it is also true that there has been, in such a life, very little fulfilment. The measure of fulfilment, compared with the measure of hope or of desire, has been very small, and we are considering the higher desires, the true desires of the spiritual heart. Therefore, the fundamental law of harmony making for perfection, which is an expression of Being itself, provides that, after the wayfarer lays his weary body on mother earth, there shall be compensation for him; compensation for all the frost-bitten hopes, the longings nipped in the bud, the aspirations that were chilled and never unfolded. This compensation is the essence of paradise, the expression of that justice which is also mercy.

During centuries, perhaps, this harmony of fulfilled hope and aspiration delights the weary spirit. But there is something more besides refreshment and delight. These better desires were all a reaching after something in Divine Being. A longing for beauty is a longing for real Being, since beauty is of the essence of real Being. A longing for the true is a longing for real Being, since truth is of the essence of real Being. So with all the true desires of the heart. Each of them calls on Being; each receives a response, because of that principle of harmony which is at once justice and mercy. Therefore

the higher nature of the man, in paradise, is not only rested, rewarded, refreshed, rejoiced, but also fed, nourished, strengthened, given seeds for growth in the next life, or many lives; so the soul comes back to birth, as Wordsworth says, "not in entire forgetfulness, not in utter nakedness, but trailing clouds of glory," glory received from that central heart of Being.

In an ancient Mexican Scripture there is the phrase, "Heart of the heavens, heart of the earth!" We oscillate between the heart of the heavens and the heart of the earth. A prayer, again from the *Popol Vuh*, "May the seeds germinate! May the dawn come!"—seeds of a greater future, dawn of a brighter day, of deeper truth and higher holiness. So the wayfarer comes back, trailing clouds of glory. He has gleaned new riches in the harvest fields of eternity. But at this point there is a question which may arise, which should arise. So far as we have considered the matter, the man is in a solitary paradise. As concerns his loved ones, what is the teaching of theosophical wisdom? Is he in truth alone and isolated? Or, to put it in the traditional phrase, Do we know our friends in heaven? The answer would seem to be, "Yes, if we have known them on earth!" Exactly in the measure in which our love is unselfish, exactly in the measure in which our love for another finds and serves that other, instead of merely gratifying itself, in the measure that love is real,—in that measure it is true recognition, and in that measure it can and must endure. Therefore, as we know each other now, if we really know, we shall know our friends in heaven.

These, then, are a few fundamental aspects of the one truth that Being is one and undivided; expressions of the motto of The Theosophical Society, "There is no Religion higher than Truth," because there is but one universal religion, which depends upon everlasting Being. Our first aim and purpose is, to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of humanity. The true Brotherhood is made up of those who have realized the Real, who are one with Eternal Being. The nucleus consists of those who are seeking Eternal Being. Our purpose, our effort is, to increase the number of those who seek, and, so far as we can, to strengthen our own light that we may lighten the way for them. Here, we touch on the third object of The Theosophical Society, a part of which is, to investigate the psychical and spiritual powers latent in man; "psychical and spiritual," is the wording of *The Key to Theosophy*. What are these powers? Whence do they come? Are they strange outgrowths of the human mind, as alien as an orchid on a palm tree or a spray of mistletoe on an oak, something abnormal, parasitic? No; they are expressions of the stages by which we realize ourselves in Eternal Being. All that you have heard of the miraculous powers of Masters—let us say, the miracles in the New Testament—is but an incomplete expression of what a Master inherits in becoming one with infinite Being, with omnipotence. Of the Master Christ it is recorded that he could do no great works in certain cities because of their unbelief. The same limitation lay upon him through all his mission. It is quite impossible to reveal to mankind, such as they are, such as we are, anything like the plenitude of the powers of a Master. We should

be blinded; or, perhaps it would be nearer the truth to say that these powers are quite beyond our range of vision. But the vital matter is, that these powers are the natural, inevitable efflorescence of oneness with Being; they are in perfect conformity with the harmony of Being.

As members of The Theosophical Society, as students of Theosophy, we have set ourselves this task; or, shall we say, the great law of harmony and justice has set it for us; or, better still, has conferred on us the immense privilege of endeavouring to keep alive the spiritual intuitions of mankind. What are the conditions of the task? What is the goal? We can only keep alive spiritual intuitions in others if spiritual intuition burns and glows in our own hearts and minds. Only a live coal can kindle a coal. Only a living heart can kindle a heart. Only living intuition can kindle intuition. Therefore it will follow that, so far as we are, in our degree, faithful stewards in this service, by that fact we shall enter into the superb reality of Being; not seeking a reward, not desiring a reward. How can we? Being, itself, is infinitely greater than any conceivable reward; but, if you wish, rewarded by Divine Being; rewarded, not primarily in or for ourselves, though that will also be true, but rewarded, little by little, by seeing the light in human hearts begin to glow and gleam; the aspiration in human hearts begin to burn a little brighter, as the stars come out in the twilight; the miracle of everlasting Being, as it is already known to the Masters of wisdom, beginning at length to reveal itself for the redemption, the salvation, the supreme joy of mankind.

"He who is not with me is against me," is God's criterion of friendship. God can have no part with Belial; truth none with falsehood. To forego one's own rights, may on occasion be commendable; but to yield before error is to abandon God's rights, and that is disloyalty.—BOOK OF ITEMS.

DEVOTION AND INTELLIGENCE

Open thy breast to the truth which is coming, and know that so soon as the organization of the brain is perfect in the embryo, the First Mover turns him to it, rejoicing over such art of nature, and breathes into it a new spirit filled with virtue, which draws into its substance that which it finds active there, and becomes one single soul, that lives and feels and turns round on itself.

And that thou mayst marvel less at my words, look at the sun's heat, that is made wine when combined with the juice which flows from the vine.

PURGATORIO, XXV, 67–78.

The Sons of Wisdom . . . came down. They saw the vile forms of the first Third, still senseless Race. "We can choose," said the Lords, "we have wisdom." Some entered the Chhayas. Some projected a spark. Some deferred till the Fourth Race. . . . Those who entered became Arhats. Those who received but a spark remained destitute of higher knowledge.

SECRET DOCTRINE, *ed.* 1888, II, 18, 161.

IT has been suggested that there exists in the general membership of The Theosophical Society much real devotion to the objects of the Society, but that it has become increasingly necessary to gain a clearer view of those objects. The devotional faculty must be better provided with an intellectual basis. Unless there be growth in the right understanding of theosophical duty, real progress will cease, and devotion will become a meaningless, automatic repetition of ritual acts, or it will degenerate into fanaticism.

Intelligent devotion or intelligent obedience to Truth is demanded. There is nothing new or remarkable about such an appeal. Devotion means more than a *feeling* of love. It implies *action* on behalf of what is loved, and this action must be intelligent, based on some perception of the nature of what is loved. The action may be physical or mental or spiritual, but the principle is the same. It is impossible for a human being to act rightly, unless he has some mental awareness of what he ought to do. We find Marshal Foch asserting that there is no military obedience which is not to some degree *intelligent obedience.* The higher the rank of an officer, the more definite becomes his duty to discover the spirit within the letter of the orders which he has to execute.

In its broadest meaning, obedience is an attitude whereby an entity conforms to Nature and thereby makes manifest the unique series of forms which it is destined to embody. Such an attitude is equally necessary for Archangel and for atom, though there are as many ways of obeying as there are creatures. Let us consider obedience briefly as a cosmic process, first as it is revealed in the kingdoms below man.

In the mineral kingdom obedience or conformity to natural law is measured by the exactitude and concord of all motions pertaining to a system, whether this be an atom with its electronic content, or a universe of stars. In the vegetable kingdom the proper nature of the plant is hidden within the seed, and the whole growth of the plant is a continuous embodying of that interior pattern. In the animal world the individual creature is the vehicle of a deep and enduring purpose which is super-individual; for what is instinct but the adjustment of the localized life in the animal to the demands of the life of the species to which the animal belongs? Atoms and solar systems, plants, animals are thus, in their various ways, obedient to the respective plans laid down for them by Nature, and it is by virtue of that obedience that their types survive and evolve. In one sense, they are incapable of disobedience. Certainly deliberate nonconformity to Nature is inconceivable among them. Some, indeed, evolve and attain form more rapidly than others, and there are several which seem to drift into some backwater, to remain there for ages or even to degenerate and disappear. But one may believe that these "failures" have somehow become over-charged with the *vis inertiæ*, the great conserving power of matter, the *tamas* of Indian philosophy. Inertia, so necessary to the orderly progression of form, may stabilize some form to such a degree that consciousness cannot abstract itself from it. The oyster is the proverbial example of an inert creature; but the oyster is more to be pitied than blamed. It is not disobedient, though its faculty of obedience has become dull and slow.

The whys and wherefores of relative success or failure in the lower kingdoms constitute an interesting subject for speculation, but it lies outside the scope of this article. The outstanding fact in what may be called subhuman obedience seems to be the absence from it of deliberation, of self-conscious purpose. There is purpose, certainly, but the creature coöperates without reflecting upon what it is doing. The responsibility for failure—if there be failure—rests upon Nature or God or the Creative Host—or, perhaps, upon man, "the thaumaturge of the Earth." The creature is certain to obey, in so far as it acts at all.

Let us pass in imagination from this negative pole of manifested consciousness to the positive pole, to the kingdoms above the human or rather above that elemental part of the human kingdom where most of us are usually functioning. Mystics of all ages and races have testified to the existence of beings whose whole life is an illumined obedience, an intelligent or *knowing* aspiration towards an ever more perfect realization of the divine natures which are reserved for them. Consider for instance the beatific vision in the last cantos of the *Paradiso*. That vision and the response which it awakens in the Heart of the Heavenly Host correspond to the process whereby an animal or plant or mineral becomes that which it is its nature to become. The difference between the two states of being may be defined by the all-comprehensive fact that the Heavenly Host do actively and intelligently what their lowly brethren do passively and blindly. In the language of Spinoza, it is the difference between *natura naturata* and *natura naturans*, between the simple activity of

living in accordance with the laws of life and the dynamic experience of "the intellectual love of God."

This divine form of intelligent obedience is attainable by man. Otherwise men could not even imagine it as an objective of effort. The human kingdom belongs properly to the spiritual world. The lives of saints and sages and heroes, above all of Masters, show forth an ascending scale of progress in intelligent devotion to the ideal of human perfection. And as the parent tree "deposits" its form and life in the seed,—so the Buddhas and Christs of humanity, by embodying the ideal of man's essential excellence, may be said to have the power to awaken, in the consciousness of those who follow in their footsteps, the perception of their divine potentiality, and the will to make it manifest.

However, the human kingdom as a whole appears to be distinctly anomalous. The average human being has in large part lost or perverted the animal's faculty of instinctive obedience and has not acquired the art of intelligent obedience. Alone of all creatures known to us, man—that is, *elemental* man —does not live habitually in conformity with Nature. According to the relative development of his faculties, he drifts quite aimlessly without even the semblance of a purpose, animal or divine; or he tends to disobey deliberately those promptings of instinct or of conscience of which he is conscious.

It is necessary to emphasize the abnormality of the status of elemental man in Nature. Mistakes are presumably possible at any point in the whole scheme of evolution. The creatures of the lower kingdoms may be overcome by inertia; the beings of the higher kingdoms may make errors of judgment. The chance of relative failure does not decrease, after the individual entity takes over the management of its own affairs. A Master hints at "the necessity of failures even in the ethereal races of Dhyân Chohans" (*Secret Doctrine*, I, 188). However, that which constitutes the failure of *elemental* man is not simply a lack of complete understanding or of perfect devotion. Understanding and devotion arise in his consciousness—when they arise at all—only as flashes in a night of ignorance and self-will. Therefore, his actions leave the impression of an almost continuous nonconformity to Nature.

The *Secret Doctrine* offers an explanation of this truly grotesque condition. The explanation is veiled and is open to various interpretations. But this much seems clear, that the first men on this planet, with few exceptions, developed their psychic natures before they received more than a "spark" of their spiritual natures. In the light of this theory, one may profitably meditate upon the allegory of Adam and Eve, or upon certain familiar modern educational systems which seem designed to convert children into powerful and dangerous elementals, before their souls have awakened.

Obviously the transition from the instinctive obedience of "matter" to the intelligent obedience of "spirit" must be a difficult process. In fact, it is so very difficult that one is virtually unable to explain it at all. One can only fall back upon the "doctrine of correspondences" and seek to find analogous processes at work in other departments of Nature. The *datum* of

the origin of species may be thus illumined, if it can never be mentally explained.

We do not know *why* human nature is evolved out of animal nature any more than we know why an acorn evolves into an oak through the assimilation of the mineral substances of the soil and air in which it grows. But we can discern *how* such things happen. A certain seed may become an oak when its parents are oaks; there is really no question of the soil and air spontaneously shaping themselves into a tree. A descending current of form and vital force meets an ascending current of matter. The result of the blending is a state of being in which a living or astral form is clothed with substance and substance is endowed with a higher rate of vibration, so that new "lines of force" are laid down for the atoms of that substance.

By analogy, one may conceive that human nature is not simply one more variety of animal nature, that the individual human soul is the seed of a parent soul which derived its humanity from its own parent, and so on. The animal nature into which the soul falls is the soil in which it grows. It provides the substance which the soul assimilates to form its personality, but the atoms of the substance are no longer animal but human, after they have been transmuted.

If one accept individual reincarnation as a plausible hypothesis, the "correspondence" between plant and man may be worked out in detail. The *Secret Doctrine* suggests a larger application of the principle, to include the human race as a whole. As the individual, the higher ego, is represented as reincarnating in a series of personalities, so the most advanced men of one planetary chain, the *Manasaputras* or Sons of Wisdom, are said to reincarnate as the nucleus of the humanity of another planet. Certain beings who had attained a measure of individual human existence in another Manvantara were commissioned—so to speak—to bring the seed or spark of human consciousness to the Earth.

However—to return to our analogy—the physical matter of the plant's body modifies and limits the actual exfoliation of the seed's potentialities. The power of growth derived from the seed is continually resisted by the power of inertia which is peculiarly the attribute of mineral substance. Therefore, in this sublunar world, the objective form of every plant necessarily varies to a greater or lesser degree from the form of its astral model that was deposited in the seed. In extreme cases, a plant may become a shapeless or hideous growth not bearing even a superficial resemblance to the form typical of its species. The spark of its proper life seems to be hidden beneath a mass of matter which it has drawn from the mineral kingdom but which it has converted very inadequately into vegetable substance.

The evolution of man appears to have been partly of such a monstrous order. The force of growth has been in many instances overcome by the inertia of the animal life-atoms which should have been completely transmuted into atoms of higher "frequency." The personalities thus formed have been distorted copies of what they should have been.

The Eastern doctrines of Reincarnation and Karma represent the present evils of an individual's life as the effects of certain evil actions in a previous life. When consciousness and force are put into an act, they remain in the ego's atmosphere as skandhas, as incitements to repeat the act. One may ask without any hope of an answer why or how the first wrong act was committed. May one not avoid or at least indefinitely postpone such a question by assuming that the human race as a whole has skandhas, analogous to our individual skandhas; that the origin of mankind on this planet involved not only the intervention of the Sons of Wisdom but also the awakening of the illusions of a previous humanity; that from another aeon man received the seeds of Karma, both bad and good?

In truth, one can only feel one's way in such matters, affirming the fundamental unity of all consciousness, from which proceeds the corollary that in so far as an individual knows his own nature, he can understand what is analogous to his experience in Universal Nature. We know that we suffer from certain gross delusions about ourselves and about our destiny. At the same time, we feel that incarnation provides us with the opportunity to destroy delusion and so at last to understand the purpose of human existence. None can say how many opportunities have already come to us. In any event it seems certain that ignorance and illusion must have come to us from a measureless past. Is it not Shankaracharya who has called unwisdom *beginningless?* But not *necessarily endless!* One recalls the phrase of H. P. B.,—"A Mystery, truly!"

Illusion is suspended between the perceiver and the perceived, like a cloud blurring the outline of the object seen. In more dynamic terms, illusion distorts the appearance of the model which is to be copied in action. Its objective or substantial basis has been defined as the cosmic mystery of differentiation. Its subjective basis, its reflection in consciousness, is surely the sense of separateness, the confused notion that the apparent differentiations of the One Self are more real than the One Self which seems to differentiate.

We cannot explain the appearance of differentiation nor discern how or why it arises. It is an unfathomable mystery, like the ultimate reason why the Universe exists at all. But we know by experience some of the forms assumed by the sense of separateness,—pride, vanity, sensuality, love of comfort. These seem to be animal qualities imperfectly transmuted into human qualities, and by virtue of the force with which we endow them, they have the power of reproduction. They are to be overcome by devotion to the supreme reality of the One Self. But as human beings we must give that devotion freely and with knowledge of what we are doing. It is conceivable that countless aeons may pass before the soul is converted to the idea of its own kinship with the Immortals. How many ages have we already wasted!

In Dante's words, there must be for each individual "one single soul, that lives and feels and turns round on itself." Man must decide for himself whether he will evolve or not. He must turn round on a fixed centre which

is the Higher Self, referring the incidents of his life to the "centre of gravity" which he must seek and find for himself in his own consciousness.

Each individual is the creator of himself. Yet the Theosophical Society has its *raison d'être* in the principle of coöperation, for no man can create without helping others to create or without being helped by others. Many students of Theosophy believe further that the perfect man is constitutionally incapable of thinking even of his own development apart from the development of his fellows, for the sense of separateness has disappeared from his consciousness. Such perfection is said to exist to-day in the Lodge of the Masters of Wisdom who represent what humanity as a whole is destined to become.

There is a tradition that the Lodge was established on this planet by the Kumaras, the highest order of the Manasaputras to whom reference was made above. Therefore, in spite of an unfortunate beginning of its history, humanity has never lacked a living ideal. It seems inconceivable that men to-day could have any assurance, however confused it be, that "knowledge exists and is attainable," unless there existed human beings who had actually attained this knowledge. Our sense of perfection is an indication that the seed of perfection is present in us. It should also indicate that this seed is continually kept alive, vivified, strengthened—whenever we permit it—by the Masters. Unless there be some oak trees which come to maturity and bear fruit, the race of oaks must disappear from the earth. Does not the same law of the necessity of continuous revivification prevail also in the race of men?

The germ of intelligence is present, as the germ of devotion is present, wherever there is a spark of real humanity. Growth is certain, if we make any effort at all. But it is essential to think of intelligence and devotion as two aspects of a single state of consciousness. Whenever we brood with desire over any object, the mind is naturally drawn towards a deeper penetration of the object, and the will is moved towards an adaptation of conduct to our vision. This blending of desire, imagination and will is constantly occurring on the lower strata of our natures, but it is an operation which may at any instant be translated to higher planes.

Fortunately there is one part of our being where illusion is less manifest than elsewhere. We are mostly blind to the truths about ourselves, but we still possess some power to respond to truths which do not directly concern our daily lives. It is possible to love an attested scientific fact, because it is a fact and therefore a truth, and to love it disinterestedly, even with the most generous passion. Such passion is, perhaps, not often found, but it exists and has been the driving power of natural science since its beginning. And even a quite commonplace person can train his mind to rejoice in the presence of another mind more profound than his own. This is a positive virtue, a living proof of the existence of a soul. It must be impossible to persist in any love of Truth, without an increasing desire on the part of the lover to divorce himself from the qualities which blur his perception and halt his expression. So, sooner or later, he will turn bravely to find out the truth

about himself. From such beginnings the tree of knowledge will grow, until it attains the stature of the perfected Sons of Mind who know the Truth because they love it, and who love the Truth because they know it.

Intelligence is not to be sought as an end in itself, as the world so often seeks it. In other words, spiritual intelligence involves much more than mental training, though this is by no means to be disregarded. The soul must be intelligent in order to fathom the nature of that which it loves and so to evolve into the likeness of the beloved.

STANLEY V. LADOW.

A truth that disheartens, because it is true, is still more of value than the most stimulating of falsehoods.—MAETERLINCK.

Stand like a beaten anvil. . . . It is the part of the champion to be stricken and yet to conquer.—IGNATIUS THE MARTYR.

PERSEVERANCE

I WONDER how many of us who are beginners have learned, *but really learned*, to appreciate the profound necessity for a minute to minute perseverance in our daily lives,—perseverance, that golden fruit of the Will? How many of us remember that it can and *must* be exercised in the smallest detail of living, and during the performance of the most infinitesimal of our duties? Perseverance is a big word, implying a kind of will which is in something like "perfect running order"; the sort of will which, alas, few of us possess; therefore we are too prone to relegate it, because of its large significance, to matters of importance, and to think that perhaps we are not doing so badly if we exhibit some degree of it in these. We "persevere," for instance, in keeping our regular times of meditation, knowing that this is a matter of grave concern, while simultaneously, as the days fly past, we neglect our social correspondence because we consider it relatively unimportant, and probably also, because it bores us. Yet in both cases it is the *same* perseverance which is needed, and its source is always the same,—an awakened, or awakening, Spiritual Will. It is only a matter of degree, and, indeed, in the case of meditation, when the object seems worthy of our utmost effort, less, not more actual perseverance may be needed than will be the case when it is a matter of keeping abreast of that tiresome, petty, daily round of letter-writing which is the awful Karmic inheritance of civilized (?) man. Thus it may well be that by the persistent carrying out of any and all of the countless small and wearisome duties which fall to our lot, we shall not only "acquire merit," but we shall almost certainly gain much actual power over our faltering lower natures, —even more, possibly, than when we are performing, with an *easier* obedience, some of our more obviously imperative duties. In the first instance, there will be a mass of resistance pent up within ourselves—inertia, distaste, insupportable boredom, Tamas unchained—all of which has to be combated (and we know what a stout fight against opposing forces always does for us); while the more manifestly urgent duty, because of its very gravity, will call out a spontaneous effort which does not exist where our supposedly trivial letter-writing is in question, and perhaps, therefore, will need a lesser degree of solid perseverance.

There is not a moment during our waking hours (nor, I suppose, during sleep, though I know nothing of that, as yet) when perseverance is not a prime factor in life; without it, how can we hope to scale the precipitous heights which tower above us, and which must be climbed, step by step, as we persevere in the conscientious performance of each little, seemingly insignificant act? There are such endless ways in which we can persevere; as many ways as there are duties in life to perform; therefore we shall, I suppose, never reach the place where it can be dispensed with, for perseverance and evolution move

hand in hand; they are almost synonymous. This thought,—the continued and continual need of dauntless perseverance, seen down long vistas of time and far into the fathomless spaces of eternity, should not discourage, it should stimulate; for so long as we have the *power* to persevere, even ever so little, so long we may know that, somewhere, hidden away, life is pulsing within us, and "while there is life, there is hope."

I suppose that to each human being there are special difficulties; duties, outer and inner, which need a special courage, which call on our utmost fidelity, so that what will be a serious trial for one, may appear but a trifling obstacle (or hardly that) to another. The giving of specific examples, therefore, is not of much value, but I think there is one experience common to all, and we cannot remind ourselves of it too often. We know that if, as each new duty presents itself, we face it *positively*, without allowing one instant for drawing back, that that one particular duty seems, in some miraculous way, to get itself done with unusual ease and rapidity. One moment's hesitation, and the succeeding effort to perform that duty appears to have increased tenfold. An instantaneous obedience has been required of disciples at all times and in all ages, we are told, and I believe that one unsought reward of prompt and unhesitating obedience to what we recognize to be right, must be an *increased power* to persevere. However this may be, it is surely a fact which we have all demonstrated, over and over again, that the very first response which we make to any of the multitudinous daily duties which present themselves, is what seems to give to the performance of that duty, a peculiar colour of its own. If the first reaction be positive, our performance is correspondingly swift, effective, efficient; if negative, if we hesitate, if our obedience be not straight from the heart, the weight of the world's woes seems to be laid upon us,—and no wonder, for we have, in reality, identified ourselves with them. "*Il n'y a que le premier pas qui coûte*," is a maxim which has much truth and wisdom in it, and let us not forget to apply it in our day's work. If our wills are pointed in the right direction, if our first step is along the right road (which it needs must be, if our will is active) then we are set fair for the haven of our hopes. Whether or not we reach that haven at last, depends largely, I believe, on perseverance in little matters, but we have a greater chance of success because of that first step.

I wonder, though, if there *are* such things as "little matters" in life? Molehills are small, but history warns us that they have a dangerous way of growing into mountains, and even if this does not happen, the handling of a "little matter," like the proverbial "feather," is an indication of the direction of the wind,—it shows which way our will is pointed. Take the bad habit of leaving small duties unfinished (again letter-writing)—a dismal letter to some still more dismal relative, for instance; a letter half completed because, not being in the mood, we lose patience and "put it by for a rainy day." (This is one of *my* pitfalls, therefore I have chosen it as illustration.) Yet how much more real force I should have gained (not to mention an easier conscience) had I persisted in finishing that letter, dismal or not, before passing on to my next

duty. The chances are that if the writing of that letter had really bored me almost past endurance, and if, in the face of this boredom, I had persisted in carrying out to the end the task which belonged to that hour, my dismal relative would have found that my dismal letter had somehow taken on quite a cheerful and interesting tone after all, and he or she would no doubt have wondered why this should be, since *all* my letters had invariably been dismal. The real reason would not have been guessed,—that because I had had the energy and the fidelity to persevere even in so small a task, I had attracted all the powers for good in all the universe to my side. That is a large claim, but I believe it to be true. Or take the habit of snatching one last wink of sleep after our alarm has sounded. (This does *not* happen to be one of my temptations, therefore, again, I choose it.) Why do we set our alarm clock at that particular hour, unless we know that we ought to get up? And if we *ought* to get up then, *why not do so?* Our whole day would be more positive, we should have a firmer grip on ourselves if we would resolve, the night before, to be out of bed and standing with our own two feet firmly planted on the floor before the alarm ceased to ring. A little matter, perhaps, but try it, you who love that fatal "last wink," and see what it will do for you.

Of course, the most difficult field of action is perseverance in the control of our thoughts and feelings, but this is so exhaustless a subject that it would need a "chapter" all to itself; besides which, I am not qualified to speak, since I have never, myself, succeeded in controlling either. We can all play about with theories, however, and here, again, I think it is often the little things which trip us, at least they are more likely to retard what otherwise might be a steady enough growth; for there is a solemnity in wrestling with an evil thought or emotion, because we are quick to recognize in it an opponent which calls on us to prepare for a life and death struggle; and, as in the case of the performing of important or of insignificant duties, our effort is spontaneous or otherwise in more or less exact ratio to that importance or that insignificance. Therefore, if our wills be firm, if they have been even a very little purified, any really evil thought or emotion will be recognized as such, immediately, and it will be dealt with; perhaps quite unsuccessfully, but at least a gallant attempt to overcome it will have been made; perhaps too, we shall feel that as we have been dealing with large issues, we must surely, for that reason, have absorbed some of the force and power which these large issues have been holding prisoners within themselves. But there seem to be no large issues at stake in the control of trifling, time-wasting thought, at least we shall probably think this until we come to the point where we have determined to replace it by something more worthy of ourselves as would-be disciples. When we have made this decision, we shall find that just because the thoughts have been trifling, their power for insidious, corroding evil has not been noted, and that for this reason our more valorous efforts have never been engaged, have never sprung forward to grapple with the enemy as had been the case in the graver danger. *Now* we learn, suddenly and to our cost, that the habit of indulging in little, time-wasting thoughts, or of giving way to petty feelings, has acquired

a power over us which is quite out of relation to their seemingly insignificant proportions, the result being that perhaps more real, almost exhausting perseverance is needed in our honest effort to dominate the difficulty, a more persistent, because a less absorbing and heroic courage, than was the case when dealing with the gigantic evil.

Perseverance is, however, not alone necessary in the management of our own lower natures, for there is almost continual need of it in meeting and in fighting the general slackness of the times in which we live. How often, during the day, are we forced to call upon our scanty store of perseverance in the simple matter of telephoning? The telephone call not being perhaps imperative, it would often be far easier to give it up altogether, and to resort to the "penny post," than to endeavour to awaken an indifferent and inattentive operator to a tardy sense of duty,—if, indeed, any such sense of duty exist. Or we order something in a shop, and something which we *did not* order is sent us. This second something may really do quite as well—this has often happened to me—but the fact remains that I did not order it, and I am morally certain that the error arose from the practically universal indifference to orders which exists in nine-tenths of the working class of to-day. Am I going to subscribe to this indifference and let that error pass, thus becoming in my turn, indifferent? Am I going to think of loss of time and strength and ease, and so follow the comfort-loving majority, instead of taking the thorny road which "the few" have chosen? I devoutly hope that this will not be so with any of us. These seem little matters to think and write about, but indeed I am sure they are very great, and I think that in the very least of them we have a golden opportunity, which we can by no means afford to let slip,—a golden opportunity for the exercise of the spirit of "no compromise." Hardly a day passes when we are not called upon to stand and deliver, once, twice, thrice and more. It often seems to me like a weary grind; one asks oneself:—"Is this real life, or is it just intermittent *opéra comique?*" I sometimes take comfort in recalling to mind Mozart's inimitable *Enlèvement*, and his presentation in it of the great and solemn spiritual truths underlying all human experience, but which he masks by the delicate touch of comedy,—an art peculiarly his own. This does not mean that I am to consider the impertinent indifference of my telephone operator in the light of amusing and airy burlesque (even if that were possible—though I confess there *are* humorous moments), but it should mean, I am sure, that we are to look below the surface of the petty annoyance of the moment, and see, by the help of its light, the vast field for strenuous, self-abnegating work which lies open to each one of us, and to seize that one little, seemingly insignificant opportunity for a sword-thrust. Whenever we are guilty of false tolerance toward unwilling or indifferent service in restaurants, in buses, in subways; whenever we permit a "benevolent" smile to excuse some glaring discourtesy, or worse still, some gross familiarity offered in the name of "brotherhood"; just so often have we ourselves enlisted in the great army of "slackers" (that sore danger-spot during the great war); just so often have we sold our services to the enemy. We must meet this slackness either in our-

selves or in others, with all the will which we can muster, and we must realize that it is quite as important that there should be "no compromise" with that which is *weak*, as with that which is *actually wrong*. Let us realize that it is only by constant supervision, by exacting the "pound of flesh" (the *best*) from ourselves and from others, that we shall help to bring one step nearer, for those others, let us hope, as well as for ourselves, the goal which we know to be just behind the clouds and mists.

Fail? Of course we shall fail, times out of number, but what difference does that make, since we know that we learn by our failures? The more times we fail, the more secure and safe we may be, for aught we know, in our brief moments of "success"; and I often think that it is in our hours of keenest suffering, in our times of shame and remorse, that we are most truly *alive;* at least I think that at such times we are less cursed by the "sense of separateness"; for in those dark hours we have a clearer vision of the difficulties, the temptations and the struggles of others; we draw closer to those others; we *need* them more because they too have suffered, and through suffering have won great victories, and the deeper the need, the more certain we may be of the heavenly response. . . . Besides which, we can if we choose, always have the pleasure of picking ourselves up again. Browning voices this by those brave words of his, in which, I think, lurks much of the spirit of discipleship, if we read them with that idea in mind:—

. . . . . .

It is but to keep the nerves at strain
To dry one's eyes and laugh at a fall,
And baffled, get up and begin again—
So the chase takes up one's life, that's all.
While, look but once from your farthest bound
At me so deep in the dust and dark,
No sooner the old hope goes to ground
Than a new one, straight to the selfsame mark,
I shape me—
Ever
Removed!

That is the kind of perseverance which we should all do well to cultivate; yet we must not deceive ourselves, for in this very perseverance there lies foreshadowed much of the necessarily attendant suffering of discipleship.

I often ask myself, though, why we are so afraid of suffering. Can we not recognize what a good friend it is to us? Yet someone said to me, not long since, someone who was in great distress: "Why do we have to suffer? Why do people say that we grow during times of suffering? That is not rational; keen suffering crushes, we do not thrive under it. The most we can hope for is that we shall endure. Plants grow and gather strength in the sunshine, not in snow and hail." Poor, blind human reasoning! The idea of human disobedience, of self-will, of sin and its retrieval, was quite left out of my

friend's scheme of life. But *why* are we so afraid, for no one ever *died* of suffering,—not if it has been real; not if the knife has cut deep enough. Suffering stings you into life. I think it is very easy to die of happiness, happiness as we poor earth-bound mortals usually gauge it. We drink of the waters of Lethe and we forget, and in forgetting we die,—die to Life's great realities, die to the message of the Cross. In times of superficial suffering we fancy ourselves betrayed, tricked by Life's false promises which have never come to fruition, and so we rebel; but when we are older and wiser, because we have suffered more, we recognize with an overwhelming shock of repentance that we ourselves have been the betrayers, not the betrayed; and if, by this time, we are very old and very wise, we shall not fail to take ourselves valiantly in hand, we shall seize more firmly the "snake of self" and we shall vow, come suffering come death, nothing shall ever again turn us from our course. Has the suffering, then, been in vain?

We have all read of "final perseverance,"—that mighty force which will carry the aspirant of Divinity across the threshold in the last great initiations, but to those of us who are beginners, that is a condition so far beyond us that we have difficulty in reaching out to it, even in imagination. There would seem to be a hidden significance in the phrase "final perseverance" which no beginner can expect to grasp, I should think, but of this I am sure,—that lofty state of conscious power must be the simple and direct result of unflagging perseverance in little, homely tasks; and if we but persevere in these, whether we see or whether we are "blinded by our tears"; if we keep even such feeble wills as we may possess, fixed and true; if we be "faithful in that which is least," can we not trust our Master to help us to be "faithful in that which is much"? Can we doubt the promises? Could he fail us, if only we *really* want him more than anything else in this or in any other life to come? Surely not. Often in thinking of our Goal; in trying to get the "feel," the "touch" of what it must be like, I repeat to myself a line (slightly altered and adapted to fill my own particular need) of a beautiful Elizabethan lyric which has very old and dear associations:

"Time stands still while gazing on His face."

To me, that *is* my Goal, and when I reach that state, not as a hope, but as a burning reality, then I shall know that I am Home at last; then I shall know that the Kingdom of Heaven has come.

BEGINNER.

BRIHAD ARANYAKA UPANISHAD

PART II. SECTIONS 1–3

KSHATRIYA AND BRAHMAN

THE dramatic dialogue in the first of the three sections here translated illustrates a situation which occurs many times in the great Upanishads: the superiority of the Heart Doctrine which was in the possession of the Kshatriya kings, or Rajputs, as compared with the Eye Doctrine in the possession of the Brahmans. Two famous dramatic dialogues which come later in this Upanishad are illustrations of the same superiority. In all of them there is a spirit of fine irony, somewhat at the expense of the Brahmans, as, for example, the description of the young Brahman Shvetaketu, as "conceited, vain of his learning, and proud." So the word Dripta, which forms the first part of the Brahman's name in the present dialogue, means "arrogant"; "Arrogance, the son of Balaka," would be a fair rendering of his name. Further, he is called "learned" rather than "wise." So small touches are multiplied to give the dramatic fragment its atmosphere.

In conformity with this fine and gentle irony, the Brahman, when he comes to King Ajatashatru, does not wait until the king asks him a question, but at once volunteers to impart to him the ultimate wisdom, making use of a polite imperative, "Let me declare to thee the Eternal!" King Ajatashatru speaks as though he accepted the Brahman at his own high valuation, "A thousand cattle we give for teaching such as that!"

Then, when the Brahman names the spiritual Power in the sun as the Eternal, the king replies in effect, "Rest not thy claim to superior knowledge on that, for I know it already, and still more." And it is worth noting that, while in each sentence the Brahman gives only a mental statement, an expression of theoretical knowledge, the king not only responds that this is already known to him, but adds a description of the concrete spiritual fruit which is gained when that theoretical knowledge is transformed by action into realized wisdom.

A consistent symbolism runs through all the answers. We are, in fact, explicitly advised that the teaching is symbolic in the second section here translated, where we are told of the "inverted goblet" in which all glory is disposed, and on the rim of which seven Seers are seated. For the text of the Upanishad goes on to tell us that the inverted goblet is the head, while the seven Seers are the powers of perception whose organs are on the surface of the head, with interior powers corresponding to them, which we may identify as active centres in the brain. In the same spirit of interpreted symbolism the Commentary attributed to Shankara Acharya not only gives a spiritual

rendering for each of the king's responses, but adds what we might call correspondences in the inner nature of man, "in the heart," as he expresses it.

The powers named have the same mystical meaning as always in the great Upanishads, or, to speak more exactly, each has a multiple meaning. Thus the sun means at once the visible sun and the spiritual sun, the Logos; and in the visible sun a series of principles are recognized, beginning with the outer robe of the sun, which is the source of vital heat for living things upon the earth, and ascending to that higher corresponding power which nourishes the higher principles of our complex nature. Thus the sun is "of all beings the head and ruler"; and he who really knows the powers of the sun, and the spiritual powers of the Logos which they represent, becomes in truth "of all beings the head and ruler."

In the same way the moon is the symbol of a series of correlated powers. The moon, called King Soma, represents, first, a power which is concerned with vital functions, including the germination and growth of plants. Therefore it is said that he who rightly knows this power is nourished and sustained by food. But Soma is also the juice pressed from a plant esteemed as sacred, which induces psychical states of lucidity, and to which much of the Sama Veda is dedicated. Soma, the moon, stands for the psychical nature, both mental and emotional; a fitting symbol, because the moon, like the psychical nature, shines by borrowed light, and perpetually waxes and wanes, like the moods of the psychical nature.

Again, "progeny" or "offspring" has a series of meanings: first, the primary meaning of sons, indispensable in the Brahman system, because they perform the sacrifice to the shades of departed ancestors, whose welfare and happiness in the unseen world depend on the punctual and repeated offering of this sacrifice; a system which is in full force among the Brahmans at the present day, and on which their law of inheritance depends. But "sons" also mean future incarnations, which are the children of the present and past incarnations. Finally, as we shall see in a later section, the "child" is the true personality, who comes into being through the transmutation of the outer personality. In this transmutation a power described as "lightning" appears to play a part; therefore the wise king says, "Radiant becomes his progeny" who rightly knows this teaching.

The king's next response, regarding the spiritual power in "shining ether," that fine essence which is called Akasha, carries the same teaching a step farther. For "cattle" are the symbol of powers of perception and action, in this case spiritual powers. Therefore the king declares that he who rightly knows this power is rewarded by "offspring and cattle." The "child" grows and comes into the use of his powers; becoming a present immortal, he "does not depart from this world."

The wind is the symbol of the Great Breath, of which the power called Fohat is said to be the active manifestation. Therefore the king says that he who rightly knows this power, becomes victorious, invincible, conquering his foes.

Fire again is a multiple symbol: bodily fire, electrical fire, spiritual fire, with the highest form, divine fire, of which these three are aspects, and which contains them all. Of him who rightly knows this, the "progeny" also is victorious.

The same teaching is carried on in the response regarding the "waters" and the "secondary" form. The waters generally stand for the reflecting power through which manifestation and self-consciousness are brought into being. In the present case, the "secondary form" is, perhaps, the "subtile" body, whose nature and consciousness are described in another Upanishad. The "mirror" in the next response would seem to be a higher aspect of the same power.

By "the breath of the word that goes after him who goes," the Gargya may mean either a voice calling one who is departing, or the invocation of the shades of the departed, in the sacrifice offered by the son and heir. The Commentary explains it as the "breath of life," perhaps a power transmuted, or transferred, to the subtile body, in conformity with the general trend of the king's teaching.

In the king's next response, the "inseparable companion" seems to be the higher individuality, attained by him who has followed the path which the king has already indicated. But the higher individuality is not thereby isolated, "nor is his company separated from him."

The symbolism of the "shadow," of "the light and the shadow," occurs many times in the Upanishads. In general, the "shadow" is the vesture on any plane, while the "light" is the consciousness within, or belonging to, that vesture. In the larger cosmic sense, the light is the Logos, while the shadow is Nature, in and through which the Logos is manifested.

By "the spiritual power within oneself," the Brahman seems to mean no more than the outer, personal consciousness. This thought the king expands by adding the inner, higher Self.

Then comes the finely ironical climax of the story. The Brahman is silent. The king asks, "Only so much?" And the Brahman is compelled to answer, "Only so much!" He has come to the end of his knowledge, which at each step has been proved inadequate and incomplete.

Then, like the humble father of the young Brahman Shvetaketu, but unlike Shvetaketu himself, the Brahman asks the Rajput to accept him as a disciple. The Rajput accepts him, after reminding him, once more with fine irony, that this is "against the grain," quite contrary to the view of the Brahmans regarding their own superior wisdom.

In the strange episode that follows, the method of symbolism is continued. The man who is "asleep" appears to represent the common consciousness of mankind; as Paul the Initiate says, "It is high time to awake out of sleep." Two efforts are made to awake the sleeper. First, he is called by a name we have already met, "King Soma." This seems to mean the appeal of the mind to the mind; but a mental appeal, affecting the mind only, will not awake the sleeper. Then the king presses him with his hand, and he awakes; the meaning would seem to be that the touch of the Master is needed.

The teaching that follows, regarding the indrawing of the powers of perception and action, whether in sleep or in death, has already been given in "Prashna Upanishad," and, more completely, in "Mandukya Upanishad," which describes the ascending planes of consciousness from the physical, through the psychical, to the spiritual and divine. These ascending planes are traversed, in part at least, on three occasions: first, as we sleep each night, passing into the realm of dream, and then into dreamlessness; this last stage being hardly developed for the great majority of mankind, and therefore contributing almost no element to the personal memory; second, the passage of the soul through the same planes after death, the soul bringing back from the higher plane refreshment and vigour to begin a new life, but, as before, little definite memory; third, the conscious and victorious ascent of liberation, "from which he returns not." In each case, the first step is the withdrawal of the powers of perception and action from an outer to an inner vesture, but only in the last case is this vesture fully defined.

Something has already been said regarding the meaning of the second section here translated. The mysterious "child" appears to be the nascent spiritual man; the lower and the upper house are the body and the head, whose powers, or their counterpart, are to grow in the "child." The pillar, the power which supports the dwelling, is said by the Upanishad to be the life-breath; but this often means the "central life," the permanent life-power of the spiritual man, which puts forth successive incarnations as the spider puts forth the web, or as the small sparks come forth from the fire. This permanent spiritual power is the energizing force in the growth of the "child." The meaning of the cord is not clear. The Upanishad describes it as "what is eaten"; but what is eaten means, in a larger sense, what is experienced, or the Karma of the individual, which *Light on the Path* describes as a rope, passing from the infinite to the infinite, and at last rising from the shadow into the shine.

We are told that he who knows "holds back the seven half-brothers." The seven half-brothers appear to be the powers of the false personality, that is, the five senses, the mind, and the lower self-consciousness, through which the man identifies himself with his body. These powers, which draw on the treasure of the life-force, are the rivals of the powers of the "child"; they must be held back if he is to come into his inheritance.

In the passage which immediately follows, the underlying thought is the thread of connection between each power of the outer man, destined to be transferred in a more spiritual form to his "child," and a great spiritual power, to which the name of one of the traditional divinities is given, as Agni, Indra, and so on. They are the seven powers of the manifested Logos, and are here called "the seven imperishable beings." While the details of the description may seem fanciful, the underlying thought is quite clear: each power in man, the microcosm, has its source in a corresponding macrocosmic power. The food of spiritual experience fails not for him who thus knows.

The powers of the microcosm are further given the names of seven famous

Seers of the Rig Veda. The seven powers are the two eyes, two ears, two nostrils and the mouth, as the location of the sense of taste concerned in the eating of food. "Voice," the eighth, communes with the Eternal. This has a twofold meaning: first, the use of the voice in prayer and invocation; second, voice as representing the creative Logos, the formative Word, of which voice in man is the representative and derivative. These seven Seers are the Seven Rishis after whom the great northern constellation is named, thus once more suggesting the heavenly origin of the powers of man.

The third section translated is simpler; it considers the world and man under two aspects: that which has form and is therefore finite, and the formless spirit, which is eternal. Since spirit is formless, it can be defined only by negatives; by setting aside the limitations of the finite, as we do, when we say "infinite," and "immortal." Therefore the Upanishad substitutes for a definition the words "Not thus! Not thus!" or, more positively, "the Real of the real." The "form of this spiritual Power" seems to be a description of the rainbow colours which correspond to the spiritual forces; the lightning-flash is again the electrical power called Fohat.

The translation of these three sections follows.

I

Driptabalaki of the Gargya clan was a learned man. To Ajatashatru, the Raja of Benares, he said, "Let me declare to thee the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "A thousand cattle we give for teaching such as that, so that folk run and cry, 'A king like Janaka is here!'"

Then the Gargya said, "That spiritual Power in the sun, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as excellent, of all beings the head and ruler. He who thus reverences him, becomes excellent, of all beings the head and ruler."

Then the Gargya said, "That spiritual Power in the moon, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as the great King Soma, wrapped in his pale robe. He who thus reverences him, day by day he is nourished and sustained, nor does his food fail."

Then the Gargya said, "That spiritual Power in the lightning, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as the radiant. He who thus reverences him, becomes radiant; radiant, verily, becomes his progeny."

Then the Gargya said, "That spiritual Power in the shining ether, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as the full, the unchanging. He who thus reverences

him, is filled with offspring and cattle, nor does his progeny depart from this world."

Then the Gargya said, "The spiritual Power that is in the breath of the wind, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as the ruler, irresistible, the invincible host. He who thus reverences him, becomes victorious, invincible, conquering his foes."

Then the Gargya said, "The spiritual Power that is in fire, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as the victor. He who thus reverences him becomes a victor; his progeny also is victorious."

Then the Gargya said, "The spiritual Power that is in the waters, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as the secondary form. He who thus reverences him, attains to his secondary form, not to that which is not his secondary form. Thus the secondary form is born from him."

Then the Gargya said, "The spiritual Power that is in the mirror, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as possessor of the rays. He who thus reverences him is endowed with rays; his progeny is endowed with rays. His rays outshine whomsoever he encounters."

Then the Gargya said, "This breath of the word that goes after him who goes, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as the breath of life. He who thus reverences him, even in this world gains the full span of life, nor before the time does life depart from him."

Then the Gargya said, "The spiritual Power that is in the spaces, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as the inseparable companion. He who thus reverences him, becomes possessed of the companion, nor is his company separated from him."

Then the Gargya said, "The spiritual Power that is formed of shadow, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as death. He who thus reverences him, even in this world gains the full span of life, nor does death come to him before the time."

Then the Gargya said, "The spiritual Power that is in oneself, him I reverence as the Eternal!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "Nay, rest not thy teaching upon him! For already I reverence him as endowed with the Self. He who thus reverences

him, endowed with the Self, verily, he becomes and his progeny is endowed with the Self."

Then the Gargya was silent.

Then Ajatashatru said, "Only so much?"

"Only so much," he replied.

He said, "Not with so much is it known!"

Then the Gargya said, "Let me come to thee as a disciple!"

Then Ajatashatru said, "It is against the grain that a Brahman should come to a Kshatriya, with the thought, 'He will declare to me the Eternal!' But I shall cause thee to know the greater wisdom!"

Taking him by the hand, he stood up. Then they two went to a man who was asleep. With these words they called upon him, "Great one in the pale robe, King Soma!" But he did not stand up.

Then pressing him with his hand, he caused him to awake, so that he stood up. Then Ajatashatru said, "When this one was thus asleep, this man who possesses knowledge, where was he then? Whence has he thus come?"

This also the Gargya did not understand.

Then Ajatashatru said, "When this one was thus asleep, this man who possesses knowledge, then by means of his knowledge drawing in the knowledge of these life-breaths, he rests in the shining ether which is in the heart within. When he thus withdraws them, then they say that the man sleeps. Then the life-breath is withdrawn, voice is withdrawn, vision is withdrawn, hearing is withdrawn, mind is withdrawn.

"When he thus moves in the realm of dreams, those worlds are his. Then he is as a great Raja, as a great Brahman, he penetrates the high and the low. And so, as a great Raja, taking his people with him, traverses his own country according to his desire, so he, verily, withdrawing the life-breaths within his own body, traverses these realms according to his desire.

"And so, when he enters dreamlessness, so that he beholds nothing outwardly, then the two-and-seventy thousand channels, which are called 'well-disposed,' which lead from the heart to the region about it, slipping out by these, he rests in the dwelling. Then as a prince, as a great Raja, as a great Brahman, when he attains to the consummation of joy, might rest, thus, verily, he rests.

"Then, as a web-wombed spider might come forth, spinning his thread, or as small sparks come forth from a fire, so from this Self come forth all life-breaths, all worlds, all bright powers, all beings. His secret significance is, 'the Real of the real.' The life-breaths are the real; of them he is the Real."

II

"He, verily, who knows the child, with his lower house, with his upper house, with his pillar, with his cord, he holds back the seven hostile half-brothers." This which is the central life, verily, is the child; this (body) is his lower house; this (head) is his upper house; the life-breath is the pillar; what is eaten is

the cord. These seven imperishable beings wait upon him: these red lines that are in the eye, by them Rudra is correlated with him; these waters that are in the eye, by them Parjanya is correlated with him; the pupil of the eye, by this the Sun is correlated with him; the iris of the eye, by this Agni is correlated with him; the white of the eye, by this Indra is correlated with him; by the lower eyelash Earth is correlated with him; by the upper eyelash Heaven is correlated with him. Food fails not for him who thus knows.

Then there is this verse:

"An inverted goblet, base upward;
In it all glory is disposed;
Seven Seers are seated on the rim;
Voice as eighth communes with the Eternal."

"An inverted goblet, base upward": this, verily, is the head, for it is an inverted goblet, base upward. "In it all glory is disposed": the life-breaths, verily, are all glory; thus he names the life-breaths. "Seven Seers are seated on the rim": the life-breaths are the seven Seers; thus he names the life-breaths. "Voice as eighth communes with the Eternal": for voice as eighth is in communion with the Eternal.

These two (ears) are Gotama and Bharadvaja; this is Gotama, this is Bharadvaja. These two (eyes) are Vishvamitra and Jamadagni; this is Vishvamitra, this is Jamadagni. These two (nostrils) are Vashishta and Kashyapa; this is Vashishta, this is Kashyapa. Voice, verily, is Atri, for by the mouth food is eaten; because he eats, it is called Atri. He becomes an eater of all, for him all becomes food, who thus knows.

III

There are two forms, verily, of the Eternal: the formed and the unformed; the mortal and the immortal; the set and the moving; the actual and the beyond.

This, then, is formed: whatever is other than the Great Breath and shining ether; this is the mortal, the set, the actual. Of it, of this formed, of this mortal, of this set, of this actual, the (sun) which gives warmth is the animating essence, for he is the animating essence of the actual.

And so the unformed, the Great Breath, shining ether, that which is the immortal, that which is the moving, that which is the beyond; of this unformed, of this immortal, of this moving, of this beyond, the animating essence is the spiritual Power in this circular disk, for this is the essence of the beyond. So far with regard to the bright powers.

And so with regard to oneself: whatever is other than the life, other than the shining ether in the inner Self, is the formed; this is the mortal, the set, the actual. Of it, of this formed, of this mortal, of this set, of this actual, the animating essence is the power of vision, for this is the animating essence of the actual.

And so the unformed, that which is the life, the shining ether in the inner Self, that which is the immortal, that which is the moving, that which is the beyond; of this unformed, of this immortal, of this moving, of this beyond, the animating essence is the spiritual Power which is in the right eye, for this is the essence of the beyond.

Of him, of this spiritual Power, the form is as a saffron robe, as shining white wool, as the purple beetle's covering, as a flame of fire, as a white lotus, as a sudden lightning-flash. As a sudden lightning-flash, verily, is the splendour of him who thus knows.

And so of this there is the definition: "Not thus! Not thus!" For nothing can go farther than this "Not thus!" And so the name that is given is "the Real of the real"; for the life-breaths are the real, and of them this is the Real.

C. J.

(*To be continued*)

A great soul will be strong to live, as well as to think.—EMERSON.

Despise not thou a small thing, either for evil or for good; for a look may work thy ruin, or a word create thy wealth: and it is but the littleness of man that seeth no greatness in a trifle.—TUPPER.

ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

TWO letters, giving impressions of the Convention, fell into the Recorder's hands. Clearly, they were destined for the "Screen"; they might have been written for the "Screen": so the Recorder defied all and sundry to snatch them from him. The first was written by Colonel Knoff of Norway; the second by Mr. Box of California. Colonel Knoff headed his: "Letter from a grateful and happy partaker in the Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society, April 30th, 1927." He writes:

"As one of the lucky and highly privileged members of The Theosophical Society—a member living far away from New York, but who was suddenly and most unexpectedly put in a position to be able to be present at the important and solemn meeting when The Theosophical Society, the representative of the Great Lodge (the assembly of the Holy Ones) had its Annual Convention at New York this year—I must write a few lines to you with my heartfelt thanks for what I have received of kindness, hospitality, and spiritual gifts at this, to me, most unique occasion.

"It was the first opportunity I ever had to attend a Convention, and I came, therefore, both with some excitement and expectation. And I was not disappointed. When looking back on the deliberations and activities of the Convention, I notice especially the following most important facts:

(1). "There were assembled at this Convention a great number of delegates, representing Branches far off from New York,—perhaps a greater number than ever before. This was certainly not an accident, but the result of distinct existing causes.

(2). "Among those present at the Convention, a distinctive spirit of devotion, fervour, and harmony, was plainly notable.

(3). "Faith, happiness, and peace, were mirrored in the visage of all attendants, and the Spirit of true Brotherhood was clearly manifested.

(4). "The presence of an unseen spiritual force was—as it seems to me—evident, and it must have been felt to a certain degree by all. It was a force from the Lodge, which the Convention was able to *take* and *use* in its deliberations, and which was the source of its great success, and of all the blessings bestowed, first on all those present, and next on the different Branches of the Society through their delegates at the Convention.

"It seems to me that the Convention this year must have been perhaps the most successful one in the history of The Theosophical Society, because of the attitude of the members assembled in Convention, which made it possible for the Lodge to inspire the Convention with a great spiritual force and ability. This was made possible because of the unique high qualities displayed by the Convention as such, viz., devotion, fervour, harmony, faith, and true

brotherly feelings, accompanied by their inseparable adjuncts, 'happiness and peace.'

"This is most promising for the future of the Society;—and it must, in truth, inspire the Branches and its members with an ever increasing spiritual aspiration and love for the work. It means putting all our strength and abilities in the work for others, always acting on *right motives and principles*.

"Therefore, let us test our motives and principles *over and over again*, and see to it that they are conformable to the motives and principles of Divinity. This will help us to do that which is really good, and we shall avoid doing work that is more or less injurious to others, and to ourselves as well.

"As I feel sure that the qualities of their motives and working principles will be anxiously examined into in the future by all members of The Theosophical Society, may I suggest that Branches should send questions to the Headquarters about any case that seems doubtful to them concerning this most important matter.

"With renewed thanks for all, I am

Fraternally yours,

THS. KNOFF."

The second letter, from Mr. Box, was addressed to a friend at home. It reads:

". . . As to the Convention: you will remember what you said beforehand, of a 'silent, determined pressing outward of something,' that you felt. This was more than realized.

"Yet, to me, as I now look back on the happening, and sense directly again, however little, its depths of force and meaning, what you said does not give quite the measure of what all who are here showed signs of feeling. You intuitively anticipated much as you drew nearer to it in time, but with the outer event and those whom we know so well personally, naturally in your mind, let me say that you caught no more than half, perhaps less than that, of its inner and real significance. Neither did I. Its fulness will come to you later, if it has not done so already, as it must come to all of us; to each in his own way and measure, in the light of what he is, and from where he stands. It is very necessary to remember this, when reading the Convention report, but especially when you read my interpretation, or you may miss its point for you, among so many intended for each.

"Yes, it was a silent determined pressing outward, but only in so far as that which would gather us in, must go out to meet us. As within us you know the pulsative streams of life flow from out the heart in cycles measured by moments, to nourish and bathe and cleanse each bodily cell, and to transform its elements into the food we eat, before returning to its source again; so from the greater heart of life itself, in periods of longer time, its streams flow out to nourish and cleanse our inner bodies, by still more subtile cell-transformations, thus giving to each the upward trend he needs; thus bringing us, consciously or unconsciously, nearer and nearer to life's source.

"And it was something like that in Convention,—its benignant streams of life and light, so flowing, so nourishing, so transforming, so bringing us each nearer to the source from whence these sprang, to the measured extent of each one's passion or yearning, or as he willed it so.

"It was even more than this. We are a little past midway in the Movement's century cycle, as you have learned, and in so far as I may be able to sense what is happening, and what has happened, it is, or should be in each of us, the point of outer saturation, where the purely personal longings or belongings can no longer be fed; where the Lodge life and force we have drawn so plentifully upon must no longer be wasted; where the real disciple, the Soul as yet unborn within us, must come out bodily and self-consciously into outer life, ere it become too late for him to do so. There is and will ever be, of course, infinitely more in store for the world and ourselves, that the Masters will give; but the truths they have taught us, the light and love and care so lavishly poured out upon us this far, must from now on be personally proven if we, ourselves, are to continue in the Work, and go on to the future.

"Nor need thoughts of death deter us. Should that come—from what was said by those who have never failed us, however much and often we may have pained and betrayed them by our delayed or belated responses—we can go right on unscathed, freed from death's alluring after-states, while working with as well as for the Masters,—if we will keep right on working inwardly and outwardly for this, until death comes.

"The aim in part seems to be, therefore, not so much to diffuse the Lodge life and energy, and our share of these, but to concentrate them more deeply upon the Movement's foundations; so that whatever their true form is or may become, will remain impregnable till the century's end,—impregnable as each one of ourselves must very soon be, if we are to come to real life, within or out of the body.

"Yet the marvel of it all is, we shall be for ever surrounded with every necessary thing; we have but to reach out and to take it: the vision and understanding, will and courage, faith and poise, with the incentives to love and sacrifice so necessary at this point. Or, if what we possess of these have not been heated enough, there is the 'fire from heaven' to set them ablaze. But do not be misled by former feelings; these are not the mild dynamics we have been in the habit of using. There must be a faith of fire, though not yet - the kind that we shall eventually use when called upon to remove or disintegrate mountains (at least no one asked it from us; and I was grateful for this, because I never could feel or understand that kind of faith,—though we were all indrawn nearer to it, none the less). It is enough now, for us, that we succeed in blasting away the strata of our own lower natures, or otherwise pulverize them to the ground.

"So for the other dynamic virtues: the vision with which to look ever more deeply into life and ourselves, as we go along; with the ability, the actual common sense to be developed along with our intuitions, sanely to use what-

ever we may find embedded there. From what was said, we shall need this most; while the more freely and fully we give from ourselves, the more we shall want and find within from which to give, with the love that must be ours to see others by. All this we felt as with piercing insight it bore down and belaboured our follies and foibles, again and again, in admonition after admonition by those who know us, till our bodies, as one speaker put it, were sore; until we felt *their* need and ours.

"Moreover, in nature's harmonious and ordered course of events and things, material or divine, we must always build from below, tier above tier, as its life rays ascend; so that each created form in rising must get its support from the one below it. I can even see this from my room window, working itself out architecturally in the pyramidal buildings in course of construction, rising higher and higher, story upon story in ordered sequence, but upon solid foundations, since they need to endure.

"And this would seem true of our Movement, in its construction this far by those who have so long stood by us and have brought us to where we are, and who were as grateful as the Masters themselves for each smallest gift of labour or love we gave them the while. Ready for work elsewhere, higher and nearer to the Masters, yet must they remain bound to the foundations—until our inner awakening frees them.

"I will tell you more when I see you.—WALTER H. BOX."

"And what did you think of the Convention?" someone asked the Philosopher.

"More than I am going to tell you!" was the reply. "But one of my delights, as I look back at it, is to realize how supreme an artist is the Spirit of man, when men work in unison,—art unpremeditated, spontaneous, utterly transcending human artifice, or the genius of the most gifted individual. In that sense it was a marvellous performance. No one 'pulled the wires'; the only advice given to anyone was, 'say what is on your heart to say': and one chord after another was struck, contrasting perfectly,—astonishing differences in style, in instrument, in method, blending and interblending, like the moving colours of a sky at dawn,—a great harmony. It was unpremeditated in any ordinary way; but back of it all was a prayer, and a sacrifice, linking the Spirit of man—when men work in unison—with Its creatures in the flesh; holding our many hearts in the divine heart of the Lodge; helping to make the sounding-board, without which, as Mr. Box suggested, the spoken word is meaningless. We do not think, perhaps, of a sounding-board as a state of expectation, which evokes and almost compels response, but so it is, especially when it consists of ears that thirst for echoes of Israfel."

"How many people do you expect to understand what you are talking about?" the Recorder questioned, perhaps somewhat tartly. "Do you realize that some will imagine you mean spooks or spirits or Adepts, using the speakers at Convention as automata?"

The Philosopher laughed. "May spooks or spirits or Adepts take posses-

sion of them then; though Heaven help them if it be Adepts, who can wring necks just as easily as save souls. Still, on general principles, I deny that there are any idiots among the readers of the QUARTERLY."

"Well,—among those who don't read it, there are idiots enough and to spare," the Historian commented, rather wearily. Then, by way of explanation: "My attention has been called to a recent and peculiarly vicious attack on W. Q. Judge,—absolutely uncalled for, and quite obviously written with the same old degrading motive: to show the writer's superior wisdom, superior honesty, superior self. Poor Judge! The saying is certainly true, that a man may be known by the enemies, at least as much as by the friends he makes; and when his enemies delight to slander him after he is dead, their character can be inferred from that fact alone. The truth is that when Judge's simplicity and humility came into contact with the vanity and self-seeking of some of those people at Avenue Road, after the death of H. P. B., it was more than they could tolerate. It filled them with suspicion, and with a deep and abiding resentment. His one purpose, his one idea, was to help them. When they attacked him, his concern for them only increased. They were blind, and he knew it; they were disloyal to H. P. B., and he knew that; they were jealous of his position in the Movement, and, while that amazed him (for he found his burden heavy enough), their littleness only made his bigness that much bigger. Friends of his who were in London during his visit there in July, 1894, when the so-called Judicial Committee of the T. S. was in session (its sole purpose being to condemn Judge officially in the eyes of the Society), saw and will never forget his patience with those people, his compassion, his one-pointed devotion to the future of the Masters' Work, regardless of his own feelings and interests. In long private conversations, he explained and again explained, with unfailing sympathy and gentleness, the laws governing the transmission of messages from Masters,—knowing full well that not one of those deluded people had the slightest right to an explanation, if only because they had constituted themselves his judges, and, worse than that, had already condemned him. With minds made up, and with ill-concealed hostility, they grasped at everything he said as proof of their own rightness,—twisting everything, distorting everything, to fit into the pattern of their prejudgment. And still he laboured with them, hoping against hope that his own integrity would arouse some spark of response. But 'we find what we seek'; and they found what they sought. Like H. P. B., he was utterly beyond them. The inner, silent splendour of the man, merely added to their distrust.

"Their latest outbreak, written in the spirit characteristic of all the original group, is an article published in an English magazine which describes itself as 'occult' (presumably because it advertizes astrologers, mediums, and 'talismanic jewellery'). It appears that a controversy has been carried on concerning the revision of *The Secret Doctrine* after H. P. B.'s death. The article in question, while dealing with this controversy, goes out of the way to attack Mr. Judge, basing the attack upon a conversation the author had

with him in London, in July, 1894. He speaks of himself and Judge as having been 'intimate friends,'—which, for those who knew the two men, is sufficient to account for everything that follows. Not in a hundred incarnations could that strange combination of conceit and venomed dust, have become one of Judge's intimate friends. In terms of spiritual size and age, there was a great gulf between them,—the gulf between life and death.

"The writer of the article states that when, in London, he questioned Judge 'face to face,'—

"'His private defence to me was, that his forging of the numerous "Mahatmic" messages on letters written by himself, after H. P. B.'s decease, to devoted and prominent members of the Society, in the familiar red and blue chalk scripts . . . was permissible, in order to "economize power," provided that the "messages" had first been psychically received. He also more than hinted that it was entirely in keeping with precedent, and that this was his authority for what he had done.'

"From the writer's own words alone, it should be evident to what lengths distortion is carried. 'His private defence to me was, that his forging of the numerous "Mahatmic" messages,' etc. It is not said: 'Judge confessed to me that he had forged those messages,' for that would have been a downright lie; and, so far as possible, the writer is careful of his words,—especially of the word 'forge,' which is used so as to convey the impression to an unenlightened reader that *in effect* Mr. Judge confessed to something which was the exact opposite of Mr. Judge's statement and intention. In his own opinion, we must assume, the writer of that article did not violate the 'letter' of common honesty; but heaven defend the rest of us from 'honesty' of that kind! We must know in any case what to think of those who use words with that sort of care, and who try to murder a dead man's honour by insinuation.

"It so happens that Judge gave the true account of this conversation within a few hours after its occurrence, saying that he had done his utmost to help this misguided individual to see the truth, but had encountered a mind full of suspicion, which had already been poisoned, and which was incapable of 'seeing anything straight.' The man with whom he had talked had treated him, Judge added, on a 'man to man' basis (and for those who know, the 'intimate friend' delusion, tells the whole story!).

"All that is needed is to read the version of the interview which I have quoted—which is superficially in agreement with Judge's account of it—but to read it with these facts in mind: Judge had high standing in the Lodge; his appraiser had none. Judge could not base his explanation on that fact, as the person to whom he was speaking had no recognition of it whatever. Judge's Master, and certain other members of the Lodge, were able to exercise their powers through him, because of the perfection of his training, which made him at times a far greater person than he was normally (this does not mean mediumship, but the reverse). There are people alive to-day who could bear witness to this, and who have borne witness often.

"But the article does not rest content with trying to prove that Judge admitted his guilt. It adduces testimony,—first, that of an unnamed medium. 'Shortly after Judge's decease,' it says, 'one of his two chief mediums came to London to see me privately. In a four hours' interview she went with painful minuteness into every detail of how it had all been done . . .'

"Some of us could name half a dozen women who claimed, *after his death*, to have been Judge's mediums; but we had heard Judge, before his death, characterize their pretensions and absurdities often enough, in his patient though humorous way, to know who and what they were. The author of this attack on Judge, while repudiating her 'message,' accepted his visitor's credentials as one of Judge's 'two chief mediums,' with the interested alacrity which alone could account for 'a four hours' interview.' Truly, the very wise in their own estimation are always the most credulous,—especially when their chief desire is to demonstrate their wisdom. I am confident that if someone were really to forge messages from Masters, containing crude misstatements, and were to pretend that these had been found among Judge's papers, his enemies would accept them with unquestioning delight as final proof of his iniquity.

"The testimony next and last adduced is presented as follows:

"'Subsequently another old friend who had been in Lansdowne Road and Avenue Road with us, and had gone to the U. S. A. to work under Judge, and who had helped him in the forging of these messages, came to London and owned up to me.'

"I suspect this 'witness' is safely dead, and can therefore no longer deny what is attributed to him,—though, on second thoughts, it would not surprise me greatly if the somewhat irresponsible Irishman I have in mind—and the poor man is dead—had deliberately 'made a fool of' his former associate, whose self-satisfaction and utter lack of humour had so often irritated him years before in London. It would have been very wrong; but I have known him to argue that when a man has proved himself a hopeless idiot, the only thing to do is to confirm him in his folly. In any case, he thoroughly enjoyed doing it,—that I know.

"Seriously to discuss such allegations as 'evidence,' however, would be folly almost as great as the making of them. Judge's reputation is founded upon a rock. 'By their fruits ye shall know them,' and twenty-four completed volumes of the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, from which no one has ever drawn a cent of profit—contributors included—and all of which are due to his initial impulse, would show, if nothing else did, the quality of the man whom so many of us love and revere, and to whom we owe an endless debt of gratitude."

T.

LETTERS TO STUDENTS

March 17th, 1907.

DEAR ———

. . . I shall be very glad to correspond with you, and to answer such questions as you may care to ask.

* * * * * * *

We grow through pain and suffering. These are the most potent instruments which the soul uses for our development, and we are wise if we learn to accept such measure of these as may be meted out to us, with the proper spirit of resignation and acceptance, *thinking of them as opportunities*, and not as afflictions to be suffered and overcome.

One thought I should like to give you. There are no limits to this Path. No one has ever exhausted its possibilities. The more we progress the further ahead it reaches, until the vista is lost in the realms of spirit. The future is entirely in our own hands, and we have unlimited possibilities of progress before us, and may accomplish our destiny as fast or as slowly as we please.

Another point is this. We are very apt to say that the conditions of our life are not suitable for spiritual progress; we will do the best we can now, but we must wait until our circumstances are more favourable before we accomplish very much. This is an error. We shall never have better conditions; and if we are not strong enough to progress now, in these, we shall have to incarnate in similar or harder conditions until we conquer them. In other words, now is our opportunity.

I suggest that you give a regular time each day to your studies . . . and that you also read a portion of one of the devotional books every day. It is wise to have one of these on your dressing table, and to read a paragraph or two the first thing on rising, and the last thing on going to bed.

I am entirely at your service, and shall be very glad to hear from you.

Fraternally yours,
C. A. GRISCOM.

April 14th, 1907.

DEAR ———

I have your letter and am glad to hear from you.

I do not think that it will seriously affect your habit of study to change from evening to morning. You have not been at it long enough for the habit to have much power, and there are certain advantages in doing this kind of work in the morning which will more than compensate.

For instance, we are fresher and come to the work with the invigoration of sleep and rest. Then, and this is most important, we start the day right. We begin the day by filling our minds and hearts full of high and good thoughts, which are bound to have a potent influence upon us during the day. We shall be much less likely to have evil thoughts, to give way to temptation, to surrender to anger, or envy, or any other bad influence. So I should rather favour your changing your hour for study to a morning hour.

I think you will find *Letters That Have Helped Me* a valuable devotional book. It was written by Mr. Judge, who understood just the needs which we modern people have. I suggest that you get it. Otherwise I think you are well supplied.

Sincerely,
C. A. Griscom.

May 26th, 1907.

Dear ———

I was very glad to get your letter of the 21st of May, and I trust you will write to me whenever you feel the impulse to do so.

* * * * * * *

. . . I should try to keep all my studies very practical in character; should try to see how everything relates to my life, my daily life; for that, after all, is the most important thing. If we live in accord with the laws of the spiritual world, we may be confident that we shall make no bad mistake in either our action or our learning.

With kindest regards, I am,
Sincerely,
C. A. Griscom.

July 5th, 1907.

Dear ———

I have your letter of July 2nd, and the long one of previous date, but I have been so busy that I did not have time to reply sooner.

You must not think the delay was because you did not ask the proper kind of questions. . . . I found your letter interesting and I read it with pleasure, and I agree with your reflections upon the several points you touch on. There is a terrible amount of selfishness in the world, and it is against this that the great fight must be fought. At first, the best way of helping in this fight is to conquer the selfishness in our own natures: we all have plenty of it.

I should certainly advise you to study some of the regular theosophical

books, for we must have a fair acquaintance with the philosophy, and the only way in which this can be secured is by study. A basis of knowledge of this kind is necessary.

I have noted with interest the thoughts you jotted down one morning. I should imagine that your mind must be fairly well saturated with the fundamental ideas of the *Secret Doctrine*, as your thoughts are an elaboration thereon. It is not a bad plan to keep a little record of these thoughts, and to go over them from time to time. It shows us how we grow in mental capacity, and how our comprehension of the philosophy gets gradually bigger and wider.

You must pardon a rather disconnected letter, but I have been interrupted several times, and am still much occupied.

Fraternally,

C. A. GRISCOM.

September 19th, 1907.

DEAR ———

. . . I think it an excellent plan to take for your subject something you feel you know very little about. It is said we learn more by teaching others than in any other way, and this would be an illustration of that idea.

I can also fully approve of your reliance upon the law of love, which, after all, must be the foundation stone of the universe. Unfortunately it is an expression about which there is much said that is silly and sentimental and worse, so we fight shy of it a good deal more than we should, if it had not been so much misused. I fancy that you are quite right in thinking that any one who could always express some measure of this great law in his life, would travel very rapidly on the straight and narrow path to immortal life. As a guide to conduct it would be admirable, and would keep us from most of the pitfalls into which we stumble from day to day and hour to hour. For instance, it would prevent our ever saying an unkind word of another. . . .

I trust that you continue to read your devotional books regularly and thoughtfully. They contain most of the secrets of life—as we gradually learn, as we come to understand them.

I am always glad to hear from you.

Sincerely,

C. A. GRISCOM.

November 9th, 1907.

DEAR ———

I was very glad to get your letter of October 27th, and to hear of the spirit which animates the members in ———. It is such a spirit which wins

recognition, and which has more actual influence in the world than great eloquence or remarkable intellectual gifts. It is, in its degree, the spirit of Christ, or of any of the other great Teachers of humanity.

I believe that we all underrate this. We are so interested in the big questions of the world, in the application of our principles to moral and intellectual and religious matters, which are fascinating subjects for study and for contemplation, that we neglect, to a certain extent, the much more important application of our philosophy to our daily lives and conduct. Yet it is just here that we can all be teachers of enduring power. Few of us are able to preach great sermons by word of mouth, but the humblest and most ignorant among us can and should preach great sermons by example. The world does not need more books and more knowledge; it needs more simple piety, more personal devotion, more individual holiness, more kindness and charity of mind and speech.

Here then is our chance. Let a large part of the time we can give to the work be expended in learning how we may become better men and women, how we may let our light shine that our Father in Heaven may be glorified, how we may *live* Theosophy, rather than how we shall teach it. Our lives will teach it soon enough. If we look back over history and pick out the great saints, men who founded famous religious institutions, and whose influence for good is still a valuable part of the world's heritage, we shall find that they got their power and influence, not from gifts of mind and speech, but because they were personally holy; they were consecrated to the Higher Life, and no one came into contact with them without being the better for it, and no one reads of their simple lives, after hundreds of years have passed, without being elevated and sustained.

It has always seemed to me that one of the most inspiring things about our Movement is this thought of the absolutely unlimited opportunity which we, each one of us has. We may be poor, we may be old and ill, we may be uneducated, we may be unable to talk or write, we may by circumstances be unable to take any active part in the outer work; but nothing but our own wills can shut us off from the true field of theosophical labour, and that is the work which we may accomplish upon our own natures.

After all, the final standard of success for The Theosophical Society is not how many members we have, not how many books we print, not the circulation of our magazines nor the number of lectures delivered; it is the number of recruits which the Movement furnishes the Lodge. If the Movement succeed in this direction, it cannot help but succeed in everything else for which it was founded.

So I nearly always emphasize the personal aspect of Theosophy, because I believe it to be the most important of all, and I hope that you will also throw your influence on this side of the work.

With kindest regards, as always,

I am, sincerely,

C. A. Griscom.

January 12th, 1908.

DEAR ———

I have read your letter of the 31st with much pleasure, and I am obliged to you for writing to me so fully.

The subject of cycles is a fascinating one, and I think you do well to start early and to take a long time over your article. The best thing in our literature on the subject is a paper which Mr. Judge wrote, and read at one of the Conventions held many years ago, I think at Chicago, probably in the early nineties. It is possible that your Branch has this in its library, but not very probable. . . .

What you say about Bruno interested me very much. Doubtless you know that the *Bhagavad Gita* was a book which Emerson always kept on his table, and is said to have read daily. Certainly its influence is plain in all his writing.

Just a word with respect to faults. It is said that the best way to get rid of our faults is not to be thinking of them continually, but, on the contrary, to keep our minds full of the opposite virtue, so that we do not think of the fault at all. For instance, if we are habitually impatient, do not think of impatience and that you must stop being impatient, and so forth; but think of *patience*, what a fine quality it is, how to be patient, how to develop a fund of it in your nature. In other words, one is a positive and creative way of doing it, and the other is the negative way. The positive way is always best.

The thought you mention as being helpful, "Let the Warrior fight for thee," is from *Light on the Path*, which I think, sometimes, I like the best of all the devotional books. It has the advantage of having been written quite recently, while others are ages old. Of course they deal with the fundamental problems of human nature, which are always young, always up to date, as the saying is; but, even so, I find more that appeals to me, and that fits my actual life and environment, in *Light on the Path*, than in any of them.

In reply to your question about the italicized portions of the quotation from the *Book of Dzyan*, I have always been given to understand that it *was* done to draw special attention to them. This was a particularly favourite practice with H. P. B., who would hide some very important key to a whole section of one of her books in a little, obscure footnote, and then italicize the footnote, so that the wary would understand that it was very important.

* * * * * * *

With kindest regards, and best wishes for the New Year and for your success in your studies, I am,

Sincerely yours,

C. A. GRISCOM.

T·S·ACTIVITIES

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Morning Session

The Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society was called to order at 64 Washington Mews, New York, on the morning of Saturday, April 30th, 1927, at 10:30. As Chairman of the Executive Committee, Mr. Charles Johnston asked that temporary organization be effected, and, on motion, he was elected as Temporary Chairman of the Convention; Miss Isabel E. Perkins as Temporary Secretary, and Miss Julia Chickering as Temporary Assistant Secretary. It was voted that a Committee on Credentials should be appointed by the Chair, with instructions to report as soon as practicable. The Committee appointed was: Professor Henry Bedinger Mitchell, Treasurer T. S.; Miss Perkins, Secretary T. S.; Miss Martha E. Youngs, Assistant Treasurer.

Address of the Temporary Chairman

Mr. Johnston: While the Committee on Credentials is at its work, it is always the privilege and the joy of the Temporary Chairman to welcome the delegates and members to the Convention. It ought to be, and it is, for all of us, a time of great happiness. We get a realization of universal brotherhood, of fellowship, that we have not the opportunity to feel except at these Conventions. It should be an occasion for happiness, and a great deal more. It should be an occasion for the renewal of our courage, our valour, for the enlightening of our understanding, for a resolution for the work of the future.

Two years ago we were congratulated on our fiftieth birthday. Let us not leave the matter there. This is our fifty-second birthday, and we should remember it with this purpose: there are still, until the end of the hundred year period, forty-eight years to run, and we can only adequately work during those forty-eight years if we renew our determination to carry on the work through every day of every year. It might be an excellent thing for every one of us to consider that each one of us shall, during the next forty-eight years, put in three hundred and sixty-five days and a quarter of theosophical work, and then each one of us, in 1975, will begin with the new Messenger, full of enthusiasm, full of vigour and determination for the coming centuries. That will be in effect what will happen, and we shall do well to realize it and to hearten ourselves to that effort from this very present moment. Therefore, renewed determination—such determination as was in the heart of Madame Blavatsky and of Judge, and such as was in the hearts of their Masters at the beginning of the Movement—should begin each new cycle and each new year and new day of each new year. The resolution should be renewed day by day, hour by hour, year by year. If we have that steady resolution, then we shall carry the Movement forward to 1975, and shall begin again, with the new Messenger, in our everlasting task, which is a great and terrible toil, but should be for each one of us an immense and ever-increasing delight.

I think the Committee is now ready to report.

Report of the Committee on Credentials

Professor Mitchell: The Committee on Credentials begs to report that it has received and examined the credentials submitted, and finds that there are represented here to-day, eighteen Branches, entitled to cast one hundred and six votes. The Branches thus represented are:

Arvika, Arvika, Sweden
Aussig, Aussig, Czecho-Slovakia
Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio
Gateshead, Gateshead, England
Hope, Providence, Rhode Island
Indianapolis, Indianapolis, Indiana
Jehoshua, Sanfernando, Venezuela[1]
Krishna, South Shields, England
Middletown, Middletown, Ohio
Newcastle, Newcastle-on-Tyne, England
New York, New York, N. Y.
Norfolk, Norfolk, England
Oslo, Oslo, Norway
Pacific, Los Angeles, California
Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Toronto, Toronto, Canada
Venezuela, Caracas, Venezuela
Virya, Denver, Colorado
Whitley Bay, Whitley Bay, England

Mr. Johnston: The report of the Committee on Credentials in every way should fill us with joy. It is rarely that we have a Convention so widely represented by delegates in person —from Norway to California and from North America to South America.

The acceptance of the Report of the Committee on Credentials was moved, seconded and voted. Professor Mitchell, the President of the New York Branch, was nominated and elected as Permanent Chairman. He took the Chair, and asked first for a motion of thanks to the Temporary Chairman, which was unanimously voted.

Address of the Permanent Chairman

The Chairman: It is many years since you first conferred on me the privilege, which again is mine through your gift, of presiding at our Convention. Each year that privilege has become dearer to me, and more valued, as I have learned to see more of what it includes; and not least dear is the opportunity to repeat the welcome, which Mr. Johnston has just voiced, and to express something of the happiness which we all feel as we meet and greet each other.

It is significant of the source of true happiness—of a happiness of soul, in which all we are, as men, can share—that as we assemble for the work and duties with which we are charged, our first experience should be this warming and gladdening of the heart, through the welcome which we meet here from our comrades. It is to some of us, in whom memory unites the present and the past, not only the welcome of our visible fellows, but also a greeting from our predecessors, from our great living dead, through whom this Movement comes to us—the welcome of those who have laboured, age after age, as it is now our turn to labour, to carry forward the Theosophical Movement,—the welcome of war-worn veterans to old comrades and to new recruits. There may be even those who feel, vibrant within that silent greeting and salute, living in it, yet transcending it, and speaking with its own voice when all else is still, a welcome from those great Elder Brothers of mankind, the Masters, at whose bidding H. P. B. told us this Society was founded, and whom some of us seek to serve.

It is, as I said, significant of the source of happiness, that we should thus find it in the pathway of our work, but we should be belying that very significance were we to dwell too long upon it. We are here, not for our personal pleasure, not for the happiness that we have in seeing and speaking to one another again, but to carry forward the Movement; and it is to that we turn now,—the business of our Convention.

That business is a greater thing than the formal routine which will occupy a portion of our time. We shall elect officers for the Society, as we have elected officers for the Convention; and

[1] Received after Convention.

perhaps whether we elected them or not would make very little difference. They would continue to work for the Society just the same, whether in or out of office. We could not prevent their doing all that in them lay for the cause of Theosophy. We shall hear their reports, and be interested and perhaps inspired by them; yet it may be that it would not greatly matter whether those reports were made or not. I am sure that the Treasurer's report will tell us nothing new. It will show us operating on our usual annual deficit, subsisting now, as in the past, not upon our dues but upon gifts of love. You already know what most of the routine business will be.

But that is only a small part of the real business of the Convention. There is something far greater than that, far more important and far more difficult, with which we are charged, and which will demand our most earnest thought. How are we to fulfil the responsibility with which we are entrusted? How are we, the delegates and members of the Society, upon whom the responsibility rests, to carry the Movement forward during the next forty-eight years? This is the question which we meet here to face, and to answer it we shall need all the wisdom and light we can command.

We shall need understanding. We shall need to bring to mind what the Society is, and the aims for which it was founded. I need not remind you, however, more than by that word, of what you all know. You know the Society's Constitution, its By-Laws, its declarations and its principles. You know that it is an open platform, no more committed to what we call Theosophy or to the writings of H. P. B., and Judge, and others of our members, than it is to Buddhism or the Zend-Avesta, to Catholic or Protestant Christianity, to Rosicrucian alchemy or to modern science. It can have no dogmas, no creed, nor can anyone commit it, in matters of opinion and belief, so as to limit the freedom of its members to seek truth where they will, and to follow it, wheresoever it may lead them. Understanding this, it rests upon us to preserve and to maintain it,—to keep the Society wholly free, as free as truth itself, open to all men of good will, inviting and welcoming to its membership all those who, "seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the path to tread in this."

Often, in seeking to explain the character of the Society, it has been likened to the central room or hall of a great library, from which open many other rooms each devoted to a special department of human knowledge and endeavour. Samples, illustrative treatises of what these special rooms contain, are spread upon the tables in the central hall, so that the relation they bear to one another is made clear, and so, also, that all, who wish to do so, may examine them and follow further whatever interest they may have. It is an inadequate and imperfect analogy, for the Society really does much more than this; but it at least suggests its open platform, its freedom, and the breadth of the invitation it extends.

We are, as I have said, bound to preserve this free character of the Society; and as no one could expect all those who use and enjoy a library, to feel personally responsible for its maintenance, or for the carrying out of the purposes of its founders, so we must be on our guard against any tacit assumption that the duty of all members is the same, or that we should all approach the Society's problems from the same point of view. That is not possible; and were it possible, it would defeat our end. But as the Society has something to offer to all who seek truth, as each of its members finds in it something that he values, so each has something to give, —his own contribution to make, his own part to play in carrying the Movement forward, even though it be an unconscious part, and his gift be made in ignorance that it is a gift,—even though he may not understand what is meant by the Movement, and be interested only in a single facet of its work. Let us think, for a moment, of what our newest members have to give, and of what may rightly be asked of them.

Let us imagine a member who knows no more of the Society than what he has gathered from a chance number of the QUARTERLY (and later from the Constitution and By-Laws). Let us suppose he picked up a back volume of the magazine, and read one of Mr. Griscom's articles, such as that on "Vanity," recognizing in it a picture of the way in which one side of his mind reached out for approbation, and his thought tended to shift the scenery of circumstance until he stood forth in the most favourable light. We may assume that this interested and impressed him, as a line of inquiry well worth following further, and that, on the strength of this interest in personal psychology, he wrote to the Secretary T. S., and joined the Society

when he saw how broad were its invitation and platform. What can be asked of one who knows no more of the Movement than this? Has he a gift to give, a part to play in carrying the Movement forward?

Yes, a great gift, if his interest be sincere, and if he have the honesty, courage, and consistency to be true to his own truth. He, as a new member, heretofore unidentified with the Society, can do for it what older members cannot do in the same way. He can bear impartial testimony to what he has found. He has found something that interested him, something that appealed to him as sane and true, something that helped him to clearer self-understanding. Let him say so. Let him speak of it, as he will speak of it, if he be frank, to his friends; and immediately this first-hand evidence of his own experience will tend to correct misapprehensions regarding the Society and its work. To-day Theosophy is widely misapprehended throughout the world. The name has been travestied and prostituted; and the world has not thought to distinguish between the counterfeit and the real. But there is no member of the Society, no matter how ignorant of its history he may be, who has not found in it what his own experience proves to him to be genuine and true, and by bearing testimony to this he aids it and its work in the world.

But that is only a part of the gift that he may make,—the service which he may render. We give to the Movement by responding to it, by being true to the truth that we find and recognize in it, by being true to our own truth.

Let us stop and ask ourselves again what is the significance of the fact that the Society has no dogmas, no creed, no belief to enforce upon others; that those of us who have studied Theosophy longest are the most positive in our assertions that it can be found in all religions, in all forms of belief, in all systems of thought. What is implied in our motto: "There is no religion higher than Truth"? Surely one implication is this: that every man can follow and serve Theosophy as he follows and serves his own truth, the truth of his own ideal; in being true to that he is being true to Theosophy. Theosophy lives in his truth as it lives in all truth, and in serving his own vision of it he is serving the Movement. Everyone, every member, has his own contribution, and his own kind of contribution, to make to the work,—and we need the contributions of all.

But let us make no mistake: I am not saying that because all can contribute, and because the Society must ask and depend upon such contributions from all its members,—I am not saying that therefore it asks little from each. It does not. It asks a gift that is great. Truth—courage—consistency—the will to press forward in obedience to his own vision of what is right; the honesty, the courage and the consistency to base his actions on his own ideal,—these are what are asked even of the newest member; and they are not small things, but very great. Yet the Society has a right to ask them, and, in asking them, its free character is in no way curtailed or impaired, for it is asking nothing of its members which manhood itself does not ask of them, nothing save what, in his own soul, each man asks of himself. No man can live as a *man*, and not be courageous. No man can face himself, and excuse himself from the duty of consistent living in accordance with his own beliefs. For we *do* live our beliefs; it is not a belief if we do not live it. Theories are not beliefs. The faith which we profess in words, and deny in acts, is not ours.

But if such gifts as these be rightly asked of our newest members, so much the more must they be asked of those older students who have entered more deeply into the Society's life, and who feel for it a sense of responsibility which the newer members cannot justly be asked to share. It is not a responsibility which is imposed upon us from without—which the Society, as by elective office, places upon some, to the omission of others, as in necessary clerical details of its outer organization. It is a sense of responsibility which arises from within the soul itself, and which demands of us, as of all men, that we should be true to our own truth. The more of truth we have found in the Society, the more our own truths expand toward its truth, the greater this sense of responsibility must become, that we should keep, available for others, what has been so richly given us. No man has ownership of truth; all men, in greater or less measure, are its trustees,—responsible for what has been entrusted to them.

Let us remember that though the Society is an open platform, it is not an *empty* platform. Those who founded it, as a meeting place for all honest views of life, brought to the symposium

that they invited, a view which many of us have come, in part, to share. It is not a matter of dogma to believe that, just as tinder brought in contact with a flame will blaze, so an honest heart and open mind will kindle and catch fire when brought in contact with the truth. Every member, in his own measure and degree, has known that contact and kindled to it. Each has his own faith—his own knowledge—to which he must be true; and those of us, whose faith and knowledge rest in what we call Theosophy, must be true to it. We must believe what we profess to believe. We must have the honesty, the consistency and the courage to act upon it, and the will to press forward to that greater Truth to which it points.

As we applied our motto to our newest members, let us apply it to ourselves. "There is no religion higher than Truth." What does it mean to us? Let us think of our own religions; and first, though not only, as that word is generally used in the world, to denote the outer forms in which we worship and seek to open ourselves to the Supreme. It is right that we each should have and value our own form, our own approach to divinity and truth; that we should each follow the religious exercises in which we were brought up, or which appeal to us most and help us most. Yet if we permit our use of these religious forms to degenerate into sectarianism and narrowness, so that we cannot enter sympathetically into the worship of others, and look only at the outer symbols they use, instead of to what lies behind; or if we begin to assume that our own forms contain the only expression of the truth, so that we wish everyone to worship as we worship,—then surely we fall away from our motto and from the consistent living of the truth in which we profess to believe.

But what the world calls a man's religion is something far less than, and often very different from, his actual religion. Let us think of the things we actually worship in our hearts,—of our idols as well as of our truths. Think of the things we seek, day by day. Some of them we rightly seek, rightly value and love. But have we made any one of them higher than the Truth? Do we cling to what, in our hearts, we know to be temporal and false? If so, we are failing in the courage, the consistency, the honesty to be true to our own vision of truth, and are so failing the Theosophical Movement, of which, in some measure, we are trustees.

That is my plea as I open this Convention to-day. I plead that we should learn—that we should strive more ardently to learn—to be true to our own truth; that we should meet the demands that our truths make upon us; that we should see that no one of us is in possession, as yet, of our own truth, and that we must labour ceaselessly to reach out and gain more of it, to understand it better, but above all, to live it better. If we profess belief in Theosophy, we are professing belief in something which is, as yet, but a germ in us; is as yet but a seed which must be tended, guarded and made to grow. Theosophy is not a body of opinion, a set of doctrines. Much less is it our present understanding of any doctrines. It is Truth. It is Wisdom. It is Eternal Life. It is a living thing, an infinite thing, and it is therefore for ever beyond each one of us. But to whatever extent it has come to us, to whatever extent we have entered into it, we feel its call to reach out and take more from it, to accept its gift of itself, to follow where it leads.

Let me phrase our purpose once again. It is to keep Theosophy *alive;* to keep our Movement a *living* movement. What is the difference between a living and a dead religion? Shall we perform our task if we preserve certain forms of intellectual belief, if we make known, all over the world, the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation and the existence of perfected men; if we make people think of the evolution which lies beyond us in the future, as they think to-day of the evolution which lies behind us in the past? If we fill the world with opinions, shall we have fulfilled our task? Each of us must answer, No. For intellectual belief is not in itself a living thing. It is a reflection of a truth. It differs from the truth as the moon differs from the sun. It reflects a ray, half of whose life it has killed by its own inability to respond and kindle to it. It is not itself the flaming heart and source of quickening life. We are charged with a living and a life-giving Movement; not with a dead moon. The difference between a living and a dead religion is like that between a living and a dead language. If it be a living language, there must be men who speak it, whose native tongue it is. If it be a living religion, there must be men who live it, who find in it their motive, guide and goal; whose path it is, and who walk in the way which it makes clear.

We are the servants of a life transcending ours. We are the flame bearers of a truth greater than our own, which we yet may carry forward as each one of us carries forward the truth which is his. But there is only one way to keep a flame alive, and that is to give it fuel. There is one pre-eminent need in which all life shares,—the need of food. And where, in all the wide universe, are we to find the fuel and food for the living flame of truth, if not in our own hearts and lives? We must give the wax, if the candle is to burn, and that wax is ourselves. We must have the honesty, the courage, the consistency, the ardent desire to press forward, which we so gratefully welcome in our newest member. We must find and command those qualities, and must use them, day by day and every day, if we are to fulfil our task. That is what we have gathered here to do: to consult together, that we may see clearly what we need; to inspire one another, that we may set our wills to meet our need; so that together we may carry forward the Movement as a living Movement.

It has been said that though Theosophy must for ever transcend all efforts to define it, yet it bears four hallmarks by which it may be known; manifests itself in four ways, and offers four gifts,—though in essence all four are one. Intellectually it is an attitude. Practically it is a method. Ethically it is a spirit. Religiously it is a life. These four are consecutive, the first leading on to the last. The intellectual attitude which faces truth and enables us to recognize it, leads to a practical method which, strengthening our hold upon the truth we have, clarifies our vision so that we glimpse the greater truth beyond. It is with these two that the outer work of The Theosophical Society is primarily concerned. But they are not, and cannot be, ends in themselves. They must lead on, and if they be faithfully maintained and practised, they do inevitably lead on, to the ethical spirit and the religious life,—to the spirit of love and consecration which enables us to serve what we love, and to command in ourselves the honesty and consistency and courage to live by and for it, so that it becomes in us a life.

In the last analysis, the Theosophical Movement exists to give this life to men. That is its purpose; and if it is to live, it is needful that it should fulfil its purpose. Frustrate the destiny, the purpose, of any living thing, prevent its coming to the fruition of that for which it exists, and it dies. So it must be with our Movement. In little and in big, for the youngest and for the oldest, the truth that is seen but not followed, the right that is recognized as right but not lived, must fade from our sight and become for us as though it were not. In us it must die. And unless the attitude and method, which The Theosophical Society has taught us, can be brought continuously in us and in our successors to their fruition as a spirit and a life, sooner or later the grave of our Movement must be added to the graves of the dead religions of the past. The symbols of our faith may remain,—golden symbols, truly. But to-day in Egypt, the desecrators of graves strip golden images of the truth from the mummies of its ancient priests and kings. It is in living men, in us, not in symbols, that a religion, a faith, a philosophy, a spirit or a truth can live,—that a Movement can remain a living movement, giving its gift of life. It is only as we ourselves are true to the truth we profess, that we can cause it to live in the world.

To complete the permanent organization of the Convention, the Chairman then called for nominations. Miss Perkins was duly elected Permanent Secretary, and Miss Chickering, Assistant Secretary. It was next moved, seconded and voted, that the Chair appoint the usual standing committees, and the following were appointed, with the request that the Committee on Nominations should confer early and be prepared to report before the close of the Morning Session:

Committee on Nominations
Mr. K. D. Perkins, *Chairman*
Colonel Thomas H. Knoff
Mr. A. Gonzalez Jimenez

Committee on Resolutions
Mr. E. T. Hargrove, *Chairman*
Mr. Walter H. Box
Miss Margaret D. Hohnstedt

Committee on Letters of Greeting
Dr. Archibald Keightley, *Chairman*
Dr. C. C. Clark
Mrs. Bagnell

The Annual Reports of Officers being next in order, three members of the Executive Committee were asked to report for that body,—Mr. Johnston, Chairman; Colonel Knoff of Norway, and Mr. Hargrove.

Report of the Executive Committee

Mr. Johnston: There is only one technical matter to be spoken of, and that will really be treated more fully by the Committee on Resolutions. There are certain other matters which it may be wise and expedient to speak about. First, the Executive Committee represents the whole Society; which implies responsibilities not only in the Executive Committee but in every member of the Society. We represent the whole Society, and no member of the Society can escape plenary responsibility for our effectiveness and the Society's effectiveness—the obligation of energy, of work, of continuity is not limited in the case of any member. It is complete in every case. Every one of us is responsible for the carrying forward of the Movement. That is why we have to elect members of these committees every year, in order to guarantee the principle of continuity. We have, since the last election, lost one of our members—Judge Robert W. McBride of Indianapolis, who was in later life a jurist, but in his earlier manhood a soldier, and who therefore represented the valour of the soldier and the detached wisdom of the judge—a splendid combination for every one of us to emulate and for his successor to keep in mind. We also cannot neglect to make special mention of the passing of George Woodbridge, who was a soldier through and through, and who splendidly manifested and manifests that warrior spirit which is the essence of our task. We have not lost the great members that have gone before. We have not lost them, but shall find them exceedingly active when the veil is withdrawn. So we should let our first deduction from the principle of continuity be that it is an all-inclusive continuity. It includes everyone, whether in this world or some other, who is working for the Theosophical Movement. Therefore we can hope to carry it forward.

The one technical matter regards the election of members to the Society. In days which go back forty-five years or so, it was the custom for each Branch to elect members to the Society,—that is to say, one was, at the same time, admitted to the Branch and to the Society by a vote of Branch members, which was then forwarded to headquarters, and one got one's diploma several months later. Then came the separation into national societies—the Theosophical Society in America, which took form in this country in 1895, succeeding the American Section of the Theosophical Society. There was another in England, another in Norway, and so on. Then members were admitted to these national societies. Then came the reunion which has only now been quite completed in the details of form. Now members are admitted to the Society by action of the Executive Committee, and therefore the whole Society has its share in the election and becomes responsible for every member. It is now a centred function, a nuclear function. That is the last piece of reorganization which we have had to tidy up,—the point being that members are not elected to the Society by Branches; they are elected by the Society as a whole, acting through the Executive Committee.

One point more, which is not technically a part of the Executive Committee's report: the principle of work, which Professor Mitchell, as our Chairman, has been so admirably and cogently laying before us. I suppose that at Convention time we all think, hope, feel on the same lines. I was thinking over the same territory as Professor Mitchell, and studying what our great leaders, H. P. B. and Judge, had had to say on these problems of the future. I was struck by the recurrence of a word which they used: that we must carry The Theosophical Society forward "undogmatic,"—without dogma. I set myself to consider what that really implied. What would it mean in fact? What is the difference between a living belief that we are working out in our daily lives, and a dogma? It is the difference between a living and a dead tree. When the time comes for us to report to the next Messenger, we shall, I hope, be able to show in each one of us, a living tree—in the case of the Society, a greater living tree. I think there is not one of us who would be willing to come to the august representative of the Lodge and say: Here is a dead trunk, and that is the best I have been able to do. That is a dogma—a dead

tree. The only way to escape is to keep our own tree growing. In each case, we are representative of the tree of life. Only as we live to the tips of our fingers our theosophical principles, our theosophical ideals, are we going to escape the ghastly exhibition of the dead tree trunk instead of the living tree.

COLONEL KNOFF: *Mr. Chairman, Fellow Members:* I must begin with making an apology, because of my lack of perfect knowledge of the English language. I cannot promise you to speak in a correct way, and therefore you must excuse mistakes. Another calamity is that because of my failings in not knowing your language, I may express myself in a way which I would not have intended, and may forget to say things which I want to say.

Having been asked to address the Convention this morning, I will begin with mentioning that, though I have been a member of the T. S. since 1893, or for 34 years, this is the first time that I have had the opportunity and privilege to be present at this yearly recurring festival of the T. S.,—its Annual Convention. And even this time the opportunity came most unexpectedly. You will, no doubt, understand my feelings on this occasion. I consider it as one of the greatest and happiest events in my life. It is an event never to be forgotten,—an event that will be a blessing not only to me, but also to the Theosophical Branch in Oslo. I shall try to illustrate the nature of one of these blessings.

Going over to the U. S. A., I thought that I should feel far away from Norway, but it was just a very wrong idea. When sitting at my writing-table in Oslo, trying to survey in one view the whole of my country, I often felt as one who views a landscape from the bottom of a valley. But looking back to Norway from New York, I can now, as it were, have a bird's-eye view of the whole country, as well as of many details that are familiar to me there. From this fact I draw the conclusion that, when I return to Oslo, I shall be able to see New York in the same way; and not only the town, but many of the places, especially those where I am now associating with you, e.g., this room where we are assembled to-day; and I shall feel more intimately connected with you than ever before,—more closely united with the Headquarters, which will again react upon the T. S. Branch in Oslo, and make its connection with the main centre of the T. S. stronger and more vividly felt.

One result of my presence at this Annual Convention is, thus, that my consciousness of all friends and brothers with whom I have associated here, will be more alive to me, and I shall feel more closely united to you. This means that I have not only widened my consciousness on the outer plane, but—what is far more important—the range of vision of the soul has also been enlarged. This is not an insignificant event.

There is a certain matter which some of us at the Oslo Branch are rejoicing over very much, and that is the organization of the T. S. You will remember that the T. S. originally was organized in sections, and that each had a President. Experience showed that this form of organization, though excellent to begin with, at a later point in the history of the T. S. involved a danger,—the danger of rivalry between the sections. It led, as you know, to great trouble, and even threatened the T. S. with disintegration. But the T. S. was saved by the American Section that resolutely reorganized it in New York. After that time the T. S. was for many years divided into self-governing national Branches—all united in purpose and objects, all working for the same end. This organization served its end for a time, but it was not suitable in the long run. New troubles arose, and again the organization had to be altered; and out of that trouble our present organization grew up, an organization founded on democratic principles, with no President, but a selected Committee for the management of the affairs of the T. S. And the most important step of all was taken later, when all national Branches were voluntarily given up, uniting as Branches of *one* universal T. S.,—a true Brotherhood, a real and single representative, in the outer world, of the Lodge. From that time, the organization of the T. S. has been based on the principle of spiritual oneness and its members began to realize themselves as souls, and as being one in the Over-Soul, who is the true vine, with Branches in many countries, each Branch consisting of its members, who are again smaller branches or twigs on the same spiritual and universal vine.

The T. S. Branch in Oslo considers these gradual changes of the organization of the T. S. as an

evolutionary necessity, and the wisdom of it seems evident. Trials are as necessary as easy times. They help to lay bare our weak points, and those parts of the Theosophical Body that are decaying, are then cut off from the stem. If this had not been done, the T. S. would have failed long ago.

One might question: Are we really no longer subject to the temptations of rivalry or jealousy? Why, for instance, should the Headquarters of the T. S. always be in New York? But, my friends, it has never been said that it will be there always. The Headquarters must be wherever the predominant spiritual force-centre is located. The spiritual Law will provide for that;—so we need not worry about these things. Besides, the T. S. has now developed so far on right principles that it cannot any more, I hope, be affected by narrow-minded jealousy and other childish failings. I feel sure that our beloved T. S. years ago has outgrown such petty weaknesses. We are no longer intelligent students of Theosophy only, but fellow-souls working for that common purpose, that lofty end already mentioned, namely, to realize the oneness of all souls in the Over-Soul.

May this purpose, now, and in all coming years, be our daily *watchword*. Then our T. S. will continue to be a strong spiritual centre, a real nucleus of Universal Brotherhood, up to that day when the new Messenger of the Lodge shall come, and take the management and the welfare of the Society in his strong hands.

A few words more, and then I am done. You know the answer of the Lord, when one of his disciples asked him how often he should forgive another who offended him,—if seven times were enough. The Lord's answer was: Not seven, but seventy times seven, which means endlessly, I think. This saying has been picked out and used indiscriminately, by some who want peace at any cost. They claim that all sins should be forgiven, without regard to whether the sinner repents and confesses or not; and that he should be dispensed from the natural effects of his evil-doing. If they looked at this question as God does, they would certainly come to a different conclusion. God is more anxious to forgive sins than man is to accept forgiveness. In fact, forgiveness is always there for all who will accept it. But the sinner who does not acknowledge and repent his faults, will of course not accept any pardon,—and what he does not accept is of no value to him. Suppose your neighbour has offended you. You tell him that, adding that you forgive him. He might see his fault, confess it, and make an apology. But he may also be unwilling to confess,—get angry, telling you that you are the offender because you are abusing him and thinking evil of him. He may assert that it is all a question of opinion, and that by trying to force your opinion on him, you are acting against the most elementary principle of tolerance. What are we to do in this case? Advise him to meditate upon whether his views on principles are conformable to the views of God; and leave him in the hands of Karma or Divine Law, which will deal with him in the wisest and most merciful way. Much more could be said about this important question, but what is already said may serve as suggestions, to be more closely worked out by those concerned.

Mr. Hargrove: I think it is only fair to the speakers on these occasions to explain that all of them without exception rise to their feet in a sort of agony, feeling their immense responsibility and that it is the privilege of a lifetime to speak at our Conventions; and that always they are horribly dissatisfied with themselves for what they have said. Colonel Knoff apologizes for not knowing English sufficiently well. We who are supposed to be able to speak English, sometimes envy our visitors their ability to speak a foreign tongue as they do. Theirs is an extraordinary achievement. If I tried to address you in a foreign tongue, I know what would happen to anyone here who knew it! There would be very little left of them—or of me—by the time I had finished.

Speaking as a member of the Executive Committee, and as a New York representative of the Executive Committee, I must really be allowed to say what a joy it is to us to see you here today, and to be permitted to welcome you to Headquarters. You have come from far and from near, seeking the Truth; some of you seeking your own ideals, as Professor Mitchell said; some of you seeking the Masters as the embodiment of your ideals. It is a joy to us to know that you have come to the right place. I happened by chance last night to pick up a magazine which

contained the expression of an ideal, not formulated by a member of the Society—formulated, as a matter of fact, by the present French Ambassador to the United States, the poet, Claudel. It is one of our privileges, as students of Theosophy, to be able to recognize and appreciate the ideals of other people, and I am going to read this to you, because I know that you will respond; I know that, though not formulated by a student of Theosophy, it will meet at least part of your own need, will explain one of the reasons why you are present here to-day:

"Every day younger, and every day stronger, and every day more firm in faith, and every day more ardent, and every day less satisfied and more joyful,—
"Like Crusoe leaving behind him his heritage and his home for the sake of a Great Adventure,
"Without reserving anything he sets sail with all the resources of his intelligence and his imagination,—
"And then, at last, there where his spent body bends and where his will hesitates and ebbs,—sinks his ship beneath him, and passes onward, on the wings of passion and desire."

He sinks his own ship beneath him; he hurls himself at his goal: even in that formulation, those of you, if there be any present to-day, who have not as yet acquired a belief in Masters, but who come here in search of your own ideal, in search of your own truth, will find the clue to that which you seek. We always do find that which we seek. We get that which we want. The truth of the matter is that The Theosophical Society is a door, is the outer door leading to others through which men may pass to the Lodge if they wish to do so. The outer door to the Lodge,—and in that sense it is understood by some of us, and we believe it was for that purpose it was founded. No one is obliged to pass through any further door that they may discover or that may be opened to them. No one requires of any member of the Society, either that he shall believe in Masters or in the Lodge; but those of us who have been members for many years and who may have discovered that this is not mere talk, mere theory, but that, in terms of actual experience, it is a fact,—have the privilege, Convention after Convention, of affirming that which experience has demonstrated: that those who want the Lodge may find it, thanks to The Theosophical Society. It is only another way of saying that membership in the Society is a development; it is not a static thing; it is a living thing, and our understanding of it necessarily develops from year to year. The purpose of our membership develops from year to year, and *should* develop.

So with the three objects of the Society: there is no harm done by seeing them as ends in themselves. I admit freely that there was a time when I thought of them as ends in themselves. Perhaps it is necessary to see them in that light in order to discover the further light which they reveal; because the longer we live and work for the Society, the more likely we are to discover that these three objects—splendid in themselves—may also be regarded as preparation for chêlaship, for discipleship, by those who want it. I am not suggesting that all members of the Society ought to want chêlaship; yet I believe that after sufficient study of Theosophy even those members who may say that to-day they do not want it, probably would say that some day they *may* want it, and therefore are quite willing to hear about it in case, in some future incarnation, when they have satisfied themselves with the experiences of to-day and have become a trifle bored,—they may then be interested to experiment a little, at a safe distance, with chêlaship. So no harm is done by our speaking of it, even at a Convention of the Society! Naturally, this is not the time or place to speak of it in detail, but I am tempted to speak for a moment of what chêlaship is not. It is impossible to cover the ground even under that head, because it would take hours to do so; but I remember a time, at Avenue Road in London, many years ago, when there were some startling misconceptions about chêlaship—misconceptions which many of us shared, in spite of H. P. B.'s thundered warnings. There was a tendency to take the exoteric books of Hinduism and to regard them as gospel truth, and to try to act upon them. One of the suggestions in those books was that, really to become a chêla, it was necessary to learn how to meditate while sitting on the floor, cross-legged. If you could do that for a sufficient time, you were very near the door of everlasting life and of the Lodge. Similarly—though this was a contemporary gloss—if you could concentrate on the face of your watch

for five minutes without a flicker, you were moving toward chêlaship. Those misconceptions disappeared,—because we concentrated on the watch for five minutes and realized, fortunately, that we had not become chêlas. Ultimately light comes; but please accelerate its arrival by doing what you can to remove misconceptions of all kinds concerning not only chêlaship but The Theosophical Society and Theosophy. Make it evident that instead of being a cranky, queer philosophy, it is above all things sane. Some enemies of the Society have intimated that H. P. B. invented Theosophy. That is not true,—if only because no human mind or imagination could possibly conceive of anything so magnificent, so sublime, so transparently a revelation of the Truth itself. It could not have been invented, and of course it was not invented.

And now, what are the dangers that confront the Society in the future? We cannot foresee them all; that is impossible. Both Professor Mitchell and Mr. Johnston have already referred to Theosophy as being undogmatic. There is no tendency anywhere in the Society to-day, that I know of, to be dogmatic,—though I should not like to say to what extent that condition of things is due to the attitude of the younger members, or to the attitude of the older members! This much I do know, however,—that if any of the older members hear a dogmatic statement made by a younger member, they may be relied upon to tumble on that younger member with all the weight they still possess—because we older members detest dogmatism. As to the future, I can only speak of what we do not want to happen. I know of one or two who are still sufficiently young in years to have speculated as to how long they will have to live in order to meet the next Lodge Messenger. But I begin to worry if I imagine them sitting there with long white beards, very old and very wise. Perhaps the Lodge Messenger will be modest—he should be—and some question will come up—a question regarding the Manasa Putras or Manas —and the Lodge Messenger will make some statement, and immediately the oldest of old members says: "Dr. Keightley used to say that the Manasa Putras were the Masters." Another pipes up and says, "Mr. Johnston used to say that we were the Pitris." I have not asked Dr. Keightley, but it may be that the only thing he ever heard H. P. B. say about the Manasa Putras was, "Bother the Manasa Putras! Stop fidgeting in your chair." Seriously, what Dr. Keightley, Mr. Johnston or anybody else had to say about the Manasa Putras may have been suggestive, but it could not have been final—the truth being that we shall never *know* anything about the Manasa Putras or anything else, until we discover them within ourselves.

I had hoped to say much more under the head of dogmatism and about the nature of mysticism, but this much, perhaps, may be said now. Let us see if we can agree upon certain eternal and changeless propositions regarding the truth. I have jotted down one or two suggestions:

1. That no statement of the Truth is final.
2. Every statement is incomplete.
3. What I see to-day as the truth, I shall see as a distortion of the truth when I move one plane higher up.
4. Such general statements as "God is love," which are widely accepted, without much thought, as eternal and changeless truths, are, at best, symbols of a truth, seeing that both terms remain undefined, and seeing that our understanding of love, and especially of divine love, cannot be complete until we become at one with it.
5. The attitude of the mystic toward all things is wide open; that of the theologian, and of philosophic or scientific dogmatism, is shut. The mystic knows that the Truth cannot be defined, seeing that it is infinite.

The purpose of these statements is to try to make dogmatism as difficult as possible,—because when those two old gentlemen with the long white beards begin to quote people, I am going to rely upon a third to quote these statements from this Convention report!

At the same time, it is equally important to remember that tradition should be treated with the utmost respect; above all, the *spirit* of the past. Take for instance, the growth of The Theosophical Society. I am not speaking now of outer growth, but of its intellectual and spiritual growth. Those who have been responsible for its development have been faithful absolutely to the traditions of the past, to the spirit of H. P. B. and Mr. Judge; but they have not slavishly followed the *methods* of 1875, or even those of 1890. It would be folly to suppose that because H. P. B. used certain methods then, she would be using the same methods to-day.

Times change. Individuals change. Cycles change. Methods must change. The same basic principles are applied in action. The spirit remains the same; the objective remains the same, but the methods and the interpretations necessarily differ unless we are to remain stagnant and die. Therefore it would be fatal if, twenty years from now, someone were to say: That is what they used to do in 1927 and therefore we ought to do it to-day. Take the spirit of what is done to-day. Respect the traditions of the past, just as a modern physician, if he had sense, would go back to the writings of Paracelsus and find truth in them.

Tradition is half of the battle, but the other half is fire from heaven, and that fire from heaven must reach us day by day if we are to remain true to the purposes of Theosophy. Mysticism is not vagueness. Theosophical mysticism is not vague—far from it. Among the churches, the greater the breadth the less the height, the less the fervour; or the greater the fervour, the narrower the outlook. Personally, I believe it is The Theosophical Society and The Theosophical Society alone which, broader than any church, also gives opportunity for a greater fervour than any religious organization in the world. Why is that? Our platform, as Professor Mitchell explained, is as wide as the universe itself; but because of the revelation to which Theosophy leads, namely, the reality of Masters, it is possible for the student of Theosophy to be absolutely one-pointed in his purposes, with one devotion, one direction to his life, doing all things for that one end: and we must surely know that only as the result of that intensity of fervour, of that passion of devotion, which one-pointedness alone gives,—does first hand experience of the spiritual world become possible. If we merely had tolerance, where should we arrive, what should we accomplish? Tolerance, of course, is vitally necessary, but not as an end in itself; merely as a means to an end.

It is because of this rare combination of breadth and fervour that in the Conventions of the Society we are able to meet as we do,—at one in heart and purpose. I do not mean that all of us would agree in the definition of our purpose, in the mere wording of our purpose; but whether you are seeking your own ideal, or whether you are seeking Masters as the embodiment of your ideal, the purpose *is* the same; the result therefore being that in this room this morning, there is one heart and one mind, turned in one direction, with love and great longing. That and that only is the power that can draw from heaven, like Prometheus of old, the fire which gives our words a living force, which makes our efforts, as members, eternal in the heavens, and which confers upon us this supreme favour—as Mr. Johnston has suggested—that if we do our part now, we shall be able to go on with the work we have undertaken, on the other side of death without break. Working with devotion to-day, working with understanding to-day, we shall really be working on the plane of the soul; and, therefore, instead of entering into some state of dream after death, into some Devachan of oblivion, we shall be permitted to continue as soldiers under the banner of the Lodge. What a reward! What a gain!—because surely that is what we desire: to serve; not to live for our personal concerns, no matter how innocent these may be; but each one of us to give what we are, without reserve,—as Claudel said, to set sail from this day forth, with all our resources, with all of our intelligence and imagination; to set sail on the Great Adventure, that we may share in the greater life of the Lodge itself, even though it be on its circumference; and then, at last, not fall into blissful slumber, but, as he said, sink our ship beneath us, and pass onwards on the wings of passion and desire,—to our home.

Upon motion, duly seconded, it was voted that the Report of the Executive Committee, as presented by three of its members, be accepted with the thanks of the Convention. The Chairman then called for the Report of the Secretary T. S.

Report of the Secretary T. S. for the Year Ending April 29th, 1927

This Annual Report, which our By-Laws require the Secretary to present to each Convention, recently has served two purposes: first, to outline the main activities carried on by our various Branches, and at Headquarters; and second, to provide a safety valve for the Secretary, who sometimes gets explosively concerned over work that might be done, particularly by Members-at-Large. This year, it seems proper to condense the account of Branch

activities, because it is our good fortune to have here delegations from an unusual number of distant Branches—representative of the spirit of our Branch work. In general, all the Branches have rendered their reports for the year, and these have been considered most appreciatively. They indicate that, almost without exception, the outer work has been markedly deepened; also that all are looking forward eagerly to this Convention, as sounding the key-note for the coming year. No new Branches have been organized, as the Executive Committee deemed it wiser that newly admitted members should, wherever possible, either connect themselves with some established Branch, as corresponding members, or else form a study class in which they may gain experience essential to productive Branch work. All who receive the reports of the New York Branch meetings, especially the foreign Branches for which they are prepared, speak of them as affording a highly prized link with what they term "the centre in New York."

Before passing to the special work done from Headquarters, mention should be made of the death, since last Convention, of Judge Robert W. McBride, one of our oldest members, and for many years a member of our Executive Committee,—"a man whom Mr. Judge loved and trusted," as was said of him in the notice of his death in the QUARTERLY. We last saw him at the Convention of 1915; but his inability to attend Conventions, owing to advancing years and uncertain health, in no way diminished the keenness of his interest in all that concerned the work of the Society.

The Theosophical Quarterly

We all know that the Society is deeply indebted to the Editors of our magazine, who build, with their labour on it, a loving memorial to its founder, Mr. Griscom. His "Letters to Students," compiled from letters contributed by those who received them, is one of the departments upon which members and subscribers continually comment. A recent tribute is typical of many others: "After reading what he says, I find that things seem, not easy, but simple none the less; he brings you face to face with the immediate problem to be worked out, and indicates the direct lines on which a solution may be reached."

Through the death of Mr. George Woodbridge, we have lost a faithful and greatly beloved member, who was a constant contributor to the magazine, sometimes using his own signature, more often a *nom de plume*, but always striking a distinctive note of buoyant humility and joy in service.

There is a constant increase in the number of subscribers to the QUARTERLY, from outside our own ranks; and this is highly gratifying, even though each copy costs us much more than the subscription price. Fortunately, there is the Propaganda Fund,—and the generous support which our members give to it compensates for the loss on subscriptions, and also makes it possible to offer "paid-up" subscriptions, when desirable. Thanks to the very active assistance of a special committee, the circulation of the QUARTERLY among libraries has been nearly doubled this year. One result, already becoming evident, is that readers who once believed in H. P. B. and her message, but did not know of the continued existence of the Society which she founded, are finding in the QUARTERLY that to which their hearts respond.

The Book Department

It is a pleasure to announce that the Upanishad texts and commentary which Mr. Johnston has contributed to the QUARTERLY, are now to appear in book form. The series is entitled *The Great Upanishads*, and the first volume is published to-day; it will be on sale to-morrow, at the time of the Convention Lecture.

It may be worth while to note that one of our problems arises from the desire of other organizations to use our books in their classes. Thus those books, stamped with the reality that emanates from this Society and from all that inspires it, would be made to support teachings and practices to which they are diametrically opposed. It seems necessary, therefore, to restrict the sale of our books to individuals, declining to permit their purchase by other organizations, for re-sale. This much, at least, we can do to safeguard the seeker for truth. Every shopkeeper knows that one genuine article placed among imitations can be used to make the imitations seem desirable.

Suggestions for the Coming Year

1. Why should not each member consider carefully by what means the QUARTERLY, the carrier of our message, may be brought before thoughtful people in all walks of life? This office would be pleased to receive suggestions. There is no difficulty in arousing among worldly people animated discussions of such a hypothetical problem as—how a man could give away $10,000,000 in a month: they like to plan for that. Why should not we interest ourselves in devising the means for making a more lasting gift?

2. Why should not every member delightedly co-operate with those who give so much time to our magazine? Not all are gifted with the ability to write articles, but every one of us must have a talent in some direction that could be contributed. To sit back and admire the magazine, hardly fills the measure of complete co-operation. Just to sketch a few out of the many possible ways of assisting:

(a) A letter to the Secretary's office, saying that such and such an article has been particularly helpful, for such and such reasons.

(b) A letter mentioning some point in an article that seems obscure.

(c) A letter stating that the Branch has found certain topics of special interest, and giving the reasons why; or mentioning some phase of our philosophy that seems to need increased emphasis, stating why.

(d) The names of persons, as possible subscribers, to whom a sample copy of the QUARTERLY might be sent; or a request for a certain issue which deals with some personal problem which a friend has discussed with the writer of the letter.

(e) Positive and definite preparation, on the part of our younger members, for larger participation in the Work. Did not Marshal Foch devote years to equipping himself to take part in the Great War? His account of this might be stimulating to those who now very genuinely "regret" that they are not experts in the editing of manuscripts, the reading of proof, the answering of individual questions, stenography, typewriting etc. How would Marshal Foch, if situated just as we are, make himself an expert in such matters?

Acknowledgments

As one looks back over the year's work, there are innumerable radiant threads shot through it, by the generosity of members who seize every opportunity to assist in this office. To the older members of the T. S., your Secretary is deeply indebted for constant advice and assistance. Many who are younger in the Society also give valued help,—there are those who read proof, wrap book packages, check our mailing lists, and attend to numerous details: all with a quiet disregard for their own convenience which is beyond praise. The Assistant Secretary is not only always within call, but also takes and transcribes the notes of every New York Branch meeting, from which another member prepares a condensed report, while a third makes a sufficient number of typewritten copies for distribution. Again, as for several years, grateful mention should be made of the fact that one of our members has paid the salary of a stenographic assistant in the Secretary's office—a non-member, and our only salaried worker.

You must permit me to add a word of gratitude for the privilege you have given me, year after year, of taking part in this work. Perhaps it is not fitting that I should undertake to tell you how frequently credit is given to me for decisions or counsel that did not originate with me, but came from our elders. Fortunately, they always see our individual limitations, not as permanent barriers to service, but as the raw material out of which better instruments may be forged, for use in the service of the Masters.

Respectfully submitted,

ISABEL E. PERKINS,
Secretary, T. S.

It was moved and voted that the Report of the Secretary T. S. be accepted with the very sincere thanks of the Convention. The next business being the Report of the Treasurer of the Society, Mr. Johnston was asked to take the Chair.

Report of the Treasurer, T. S.

Professor Mitchell: You all know that the detail of the work of the Treasurer's Office is done by the Assistant Treasurer, Miss Youngs, to whom the Treasurer and the entire Society are greatly indebted for her labours throughout the year.

The itemized statement will show what the income of the Society has been, and how the money received was spent. Again, it is the same surprising story of expenditures in excess of receipts,—with a credit balance in the bank, on which to start another year! It may be interesting to compare the figures of this year with those of last year. The current dues amount to practically the same figure, this year showing an increase of $35.00 (in round numbers). The general contributions amounted to $100.00 more than for the corresponding period last year. In the Propaganda Fund there has been an increase of about $400.00. This fund, as was explained in the Secretary's Report, was started chiefly to enable us to continue to supply the Theosophical Quarterly at the ridiculously low price of twenty-five cents a copy, and also to circulate the magazine where we think it will be appreciated and will serve to help the Movement. In the amount received for subscriptions to the Quarterly there appears to be a slight falling off, but that is incident to details of bookkeeping, and not to a shrinkage in subscribers. As you will see, the subscriptions and the membership dues are a small part of our income—our work is carried on, thanks to contributions from our members. I must add that we really live on contributions,—on the moral and spiritual gifts that are made to us. Speaking of dues, I should like to say that it has never been intended that financial difficulties should keep any member from receiving the benefits of participation in the Movement. Our total receipts for the past year were just short of $3500.00, some $400.00 more than those of last year, and we begin the year with a balance in the bank of some $500.00.

Turning next to our disbursements, first comes the expense of printing and mailing the Theosophical Quarterly. This falls just short of $3000.00, which by an extraordinary coincidence is within 37 cents of the cost of the magazine during the previous year. Those who know something of the present cost of printing, and the way in which author's corrections quickly run to a large sum, will not be surprised to learn that the reason why our printing bill is so small is because of the work done by the Editors on the contributed articles. I think I am speaking to a number who contribute to the magazine, and they will agree with me that this result is not due to the accuracy and care with which contributions are prepared.

The total disbursements amount to $3475.00, that is, we have spent this year $35.00 more than the year's receipts. It is, therefore, the usual report, and I think you might accept it with thanks. If you do, I shall pass them on to the Assistant Treasurer, and should also like to make mention of assistance from the Secretary's Office.

April 25, 1926–April 30, 1927

Receipts		*Disbursements*		
Current Dues	$ 667.54	Printing and mailing Theosophical Quarterly (4 numbers)		$2983.40
General Contributions and Donations to the Theosophical Quarterly	590.22	Stationery and supplies		125.80
Propaganda Fund	1698.70	Postage		142.59
Subscriptions to Theosophical Quarterly	488.52	Rent		150.00
	$3444.98	Miscellaneous:		
1928 Dues, prepaid	52.00	Telephone	56.35	
Total Receipts	3496.98	Books and Foreign Magazine Subscriptions donated to members	17.25	73.60
Balance April 25, 1926	508.10	Total Disbursements		3475.39
	$4005.08	Balance April 30, 1927		529.69
				$4005.08

Assets		*Liabilities*	
		1928 dues, prepaid.....	$ 52.00
On deposit Corn Exchange Bank,		Excess of assets over liabilities .	477.69
April 30, 1927.....	$ 529.69		$529.69

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL,
Treasurer, The Theosophical Society.

April 30, 1927.

Upon motion duly seconded, it was voted that the report of the Treasurer be accepted with the thanks of the Convention to the Treasurer, the Assistant Treasurer, and the Secretary's office. Professor Mitchell then resumed the Chair and called for the report of the Committee on Nominations.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS

MR. PERKINS: The Committee on Nominations recommends the following nominations: To the Executive Committee, to succeed themselves, Mr. Hargrove and Mr. Johnston. There is a vacant place on the Executive Committee, due to the death of Judge McBride. To fill that, your Committee recommends Mr. J. F. B. Mitchell. For the other offices in the Society, for the coming year, your Committee recommends: as Treasurer, Professor Mitchell; Assistant Treasurer, Miss Youngs; Secretary, Miss Perkins; Assistant Secretary, Miss Chickering.

It was voted that the report of the Committee be adopted, and that the Secretary be instructed to cast one ballot for the nominees. This was done, and the nominees were declared elected. It was then suggested that the Convention should hear from the newly elected member of the Executive Committee.

MR. MITCHELL: *Mr. Chairman, Fellow Members:* The newly elected member is so very newly elected that he has not had time to recollect what he would *like* to say. I can only echo what Mr. Hargrove has already said regarding the great inadequacy of anything we can say. I thank you, and express my great desire to be worthy of what is one of the greatest honours that could be conferred. Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Before we adjourn for the luncheon recess, I should like to point out to you that a vase of flowers was brought to us, with this card from Mrs. Gordon, a member of the Middletown Branch of Ohio, who, for some years, has been resident here in New York, taking part in our New York Branch activities and usually present at these Conventions. This year she is not well and cannot be here. She sends us these flowers, "To give you my warmest greetings and best wishes for the Convention. I am with you in spirit, but the flesh is weak." I thought you would all like to know from whom they came and with what message.

After various announcements, a motion to adjourn until 2.30 p.m. was made and voted.

Afternoon Session

At the opening of the afternoon session, the Chairman called for the report of the Committee on Letters of Greeting.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LETTERS OF GREETING

DR. KEIGHTLEY: Your Committee was handed a large number of letters from all parts of the world. Norway is here to speak for itself; so also is Venezuela—and we have letters from Czecho-Slovakia, England, Italy, Canada, and Germany, as well as from America. I shall ask leave to read to you excerpts from these letters which your Committee hopes may, as in previous years, be appended in full to the Convention Report in the QUARTERLY. In the midst of all this material, my only difficulty is to locate the starting-point so carefully prepared for me

by Dr. Clark, who really has done all the work of the Committee, as I gratefully and unhesitatingly declare,—after all we heard this morning about officers whose work was being done by someone else! It is a pleasure to tell you first of a cable received from Mrs. Graves in England: "Greetings and best wishes for Convention." (Dr. Keightley then read from the letters.)

DR. CLARK: If I may, I should like to read a short extract from a personal letter that I received from Dr. Woodworth, who writes: "To say that I have missed the T. S. meetings this year, would be to state the situation too mildly. They were as an anchor which held my cable pointed rather constantly toward it. My heart goes out to all assembled, and I am going to try to be *en rapport* with the Convention at the time of meeting."

THE CHAIRMAN: Many of us probably have received messages of good-will to this Convention, and assurances that absent members participate in it. In my own experience, this Convention is unique, because to-day we have present here all of the members of the Executive Committee. We have also an unusually wide representation from distant Branches. Perhaps for that very reason, these Letters of Greeting mean even more than usual to us. As Treasurer, I constantly receive letters, of which the one I hold in my hand, from the Treasurer of the Branch in Czecho-Slovakia, is a sample,—touching and moving letters, speaking of the closeness with which our deliberations are followed, of the gratitude of our distant members for the QUARTERLY which brings them the news of our Movement; of their own efforts (very successful and fruitful efforts) to contribute toward the work. Therefore, I am very sure that in acting upon the motion that has been put before us (to accept the Report of the Committee on Letters of Greeting, and to discharge the Committee with thanks) our thanks will go out also to the senders of those letters.

The motion was unanimously voted, and the Chairman then called upon the Committee on Resolutions to report.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS

MR. HARGROVE: There are two resolutions—dealing with the same subject, however—which this Committee desires to submit for your approval. The need for these resolutions was explained by the Chairman of the Executive Committee this morning. The wording of the By-Laws, as they stand, is not as clear as it might be, and these amendments are intended to clarify their meaning. The invariable practice has been, when a Branch votes on the admission of a new member, to forward that recommendation to Headquarters in New York for action by the Executive Committee or by the Chairman of the Executive Committee. The wording of the By-Laws has left it open to question —to quibbling, in any case—as to whether election by a Branch is sufficient to constitute membership in the Society as a whole,—which of course was never intended. In order to clear that up, it is suggested that you should approve, if you will, the following resolutions:

RESOLVED: that By-Law 18 (formerly By-Law 17) be amended to read: "Before an applicant can be admitted to membership in the Society or any Branch thereof, his application must have been filed at the Headquarters of the Society in New York, and must have received the approval of the Executive Committee, either by majority vote or acting through its Chairman."

RESOLVED: that Section (b) of By-Law 21, (formerly By-Law 20) be amended by adding thereto the following sentence: "If the vote be favourable and if the applicant have not previously been admitted to the Society, his application shall then be forwarded to the Headquarters in New York for the approval of the Executive Committee, as prescribed in By-Law 18."

Are there any questions in your minds arising out of these suggested amendments, the purpose of which is to clarify the meaning of the By-Laws as they now stand? It does not mean any change in what you have always done. You have always voted on applications for membership, and have then forwarded them to New York. Exactly the same procedure will be

followed, but—if you pass these resolutions—no one hereafter will have any ground for claiming that merely because he has been voted on with approval by a Branch, he is, *ipso facto*, a member of the Society. He is not a member of the Society until his diploma has been signed by the Executive Committee; nor can he be a member of a Branch until he is a member of the Society.

After this Resolution had been duly moved and seconded, the Chairman put it to vote and it was unanimously passed.

Mr. Hargrove: For several years past, it has been the privilege of the Committee on Resolutions, through its Chairman, to make certain suggestions, which, years ago, we used occasionally to put in the form of resolutions. We declared ourselves with considerable firmness at one time, on your behalf, endeavouring, in the form of a resolution, to express your convictions about the war. That was objected to by Mr. Raatz and some other German members who, later on, resigned from the Society. It is so easy for someone to object that any resolution passed here commits the Society, that, from experience, your Committee has found it more agreeable not to express itself in terms of a resolution, unless it be absolutely necessary, but to formulate certain suggestions for your consideration—suggestions derived more or less from the year's scrap book, at hazard; thoughts that have arisen during the twelve months since we last assembled. Really at haphazard, from that scrap book, comes the first suggestion,—because it was taken out of this morning's paper. It was on the front page of "The New York Times." It is headed, dramatically as usual, "Man Never an Ape, Dr. Osborn Asserts—His family sprang from stock neither human nor ape-like." It continues: they "did not start in a forest; dawn man belonged to the open country, Museum President declares at Philadelphia." Dr. Osborn's conclusions are noteworthy in themselves, but, incidentally, I am convinced in my own mind that their announcement in to-day's newspaper, on the day of the Convention, was a compliment handed to one Adept by another! Dr. Osborn's statements are worth reading, even on this occasion, because of the way in which they endorse, almost to the letter, the teachings of the *Secret Doctrine*,—one of the points for which H. P. B. fought as few could fight. Dr. Osborn, who is, I understand, one of the leading anthropologists in the world to-day, says,

"First—The antiquity of man is now to be reckoned, not in thousands, but in hundreds of thousands of years, and we foresee the soon approaching period when it will be reckoned in millions of years.

"Second—The Age of Man, or Pleistocene, can no longer be regarded as Act I of the prehistoric human drama, but rather as the final act, because at the very beginning of the Pleistocene we find the human race well established and widely distributed over the earth. Act I of the Age of Man is during Tertiary, in what may be known as the 'dawn man' stage and the 'pro-human' stage.

"Third—While still supported by very able anatomists, such as Gregory, the ape-human ancestry theory is, in my opinion, greatly weakened by recent evidence, and I am inclined to advocate an independent line of dawn-man ancestors, springing from an Oligocene neutral stock, which also gave rise independently to the anthropoid apes.

"Fourth—The dawn-man line belongs to a distinct family, the hominidæ, ground living, cursorial, alert, capable of tool-making, and living in a relatively open country on the high plateaus and plains of Northern Asia."

This is exactly what Madame Blavatsky taught. This latest scientific proclamation confirms what she declared to be true, and which, when she declared it, ran counter to all scientific thought. Dr. Osborn makes it clear that Haeckel and Virchow twisted the facts into a weapon with which to materialize still further the scientific thought of their day,—which again is exactly what H. P. B. accused them of doing.

Reference was made this morning to dogmatism, to materialism, though under an entirely different head from the one just touched on. There is something on the same subject that seems to us to be of very great importance—and I hope that Mr. Box and Miss Hohnstedt,

my associates on the Resolutions Committee, will bear me out in this—and that is the risk which we necessarily run, from the mere fact of incarnation, of judging things by externals. It is what the world invariably does. The world tests success by outer success. We, as The Theosophical Society, have no competitors in the ordinary sense of the word—not as business understands competition—but we all know that there are those who are misusing the word Theosophy in a deplorable way; who are dragging it through the mud; and who are materializing it to the best of their ability (that is to say, materializing the doctrine originally promulgated by H. P. B.). Therefore, inevitably, they are paying the utmost attention to such external things as buildings, temples of learning, temples for this purpose and the other purpose, temples even in honour of their new "Messiah"! It is tragic; but we must be careful, in our turn, to learn whatever lessons we can from the errors of these other people. It is not sufficient merely to recognize those errors. We must be watchful of ourselves because of their errors, and must cling to the everlasting truths, to the spiritual truths, which Theosophy has revealed to us. We must test ourselves constantly, to see whether we are still being true to those great truths.

Outer success: we are a small gathering here; the room is full, almost crowded, but we are a small gathering. I think, however, that we have thoroughly outgrown the illusion of numbers —which of course is one of the illusions under which practically all religious organizations are working. But do we see as clearly as we ought to see, in our daily lives, in our study of world conditions, that it is indeed the spirit that gives life and the letter that kills? Do we thoroughly understand the principles involved? Perhaps you will allow me to use a rough and ready illustration: the illustration of singing. Let us assume that two or three church choirs, one after the other, are singing a hymn, with the refrain "O Paradise, O Paradise." Let us suppose that in the first case it is a highly paid, well organized, well groomed choir which outwardly behaves to perfection—without a hint of the gross irreverence that you naturally associate with church choirs. They sing "O Paradise," and bring it out to "perfection": the time is perfect, the enunciation is perfect, the technique everything you could desire. Now by way of contrast, imagine the almost incredible: that a church choir could consist of those who have just had a vision of Paradise, who have just been there and are full to overflowing with the realization of what Paradise is; and imagine that, without the finish of the other choir, they were to sing "O Paradise" as if it were an experience they could no longer contain. Can we not feel the difference, and can we not see for ourselves, from that simple illustration, that what really counts is the spirit and the life that lie behind external words and acts? "O Paradise" may be used as an exclamatory oath, with a good deal of oath back of it; but if it be the expression either of an actual experience or of an inexpressible yearning, into what is that word converted? It becomes the vehicle of Paradise itself. It becomes a projection into physical space of the soul's uttermost desire. In comparison, what does the form, the technique, matter? What does anything matter in comparison with the magical achievement of bringing a realization of that which the Lodge means, to human hearts and minds, and of lifting them upwards to the place from which the immortal spirit descends. If we would but take that principle to heart, judging our actions, morning, noon and night, in the light of that eternal truth; if we would but test all things by the light of that truth and ask ourselves what *is* the spirit that we are bringing into the world, day by day as we live,—we should become very different creatures. Are we calling down fire from heaven in the simplest tasks of daily life, or are we simply pleasing ourselves? If in all things we could desire to serve the Masters, instead of acting in the spirit of the world—testing ourselves by that touchstone—we, as ordinary members of this Society, should carry that into the world, which the Lodge longs to see there,—creating, by every breath we breathe, a link in the chain that is going to carry the Movement through the years into Eternity.

We must not judge success by outer results. We must not remain satisfied merely by externals. We must look behind externals—first and foremost in ourselves, examining the spirit that prompts the word and the action, and comparing that with the highest ideal of which we can conceive. How else can we acquire that which we really long to have? A distinction was drawn this morning—and a most important distinction, in a way—between those who have

come here as members in search of their own ideal, not having yet quite decided, perhaps, in some respects, what that ideal is, but having responded to the objects of The Theosophical Society, having responded to their present understanding of Theosophy, and making, in that sense, a most welcome and valuable contribution to the Society; and, on the other hand, those who have, as a result of their thinking, of their longer membership perhaps, arrived at the conclusion that the ideal for which they have been seeking is embodied in the Masters. To whichever category you belong, you know that what you need and long for is a greater love of your own ideal. You would give more if you could. You want to give more, but you say to yourself, once in a while: "I seem to be giving all I can—I should like to be able to give more —would to God that I had more to give!" How can you acquire that "more" to give? It is in large measure along the line that I have already suggested: refuse to be satisfied with externals, but above all, *think* about these things. We are obliged to live in the world, to fight our way in the world, maybe are terribly oppressed, almost saturated, with worldly concerns. We must counteract that, deliberately, consciously, by filling our minds and hearts with better, nobler things, reading, studying, thinking, feeding our souls—with at least as much care and thought as we give to the feeding of our bodies, and I hope a great deal more.

I also suggested this morning that when people have a broad base for their thought, there is often a tendency to lose something in depth and in height; that the so-called broad minded people very often lack force and fervour and the gift of indignation. They are so tolerant that they will put up with anything. That is not the spirit of the Lodge. The Lodge will put up with nothing within its own borders that does not conform absolutely to its own spirit. That must be the test of truth. How can truth wed a lie? The Lodge is intolerant in the real and deep and high sense of that word. Yet it is not intolerance that I am advocating; it is the realization that the breadth of our attitude as students of Theosophy does not bar us from the divine gift of love. Many of you will remember a prayer in the *Vishnu Purana:* "O my Lord! O imperishable One! In whatever thousands of births I may wander, may my undying love be always in thee." There is breadth, but also how great a longing—intense, one pointed, one souled. Is not that what we want, what every one of us desires? It is within our reach and we may have it. It is not something just to stand aloof from and to pray for. It is something to be put into everything that we do, and by putting it into the least of our actions we can put it into all of our actions, until at last, as Claudel said, when it comes to dying, we shall not curl up like withered leaves, but shall go forth with passion and desire.

It has been so splendidly said—not by a Hindu this time, but by a Sufi, speaking of the man who loves, who desires, the man who has caught at least some glimpse of Masters—that what to us is a wall, to him is a wide open door, leading forth to Paradise and beyond. That is the way that we ought to treat the obstacles that Colonel Knoff was talking about when he said that troubles, instead of swamping us, should be seen as means to our end,—instead of as a wall, should be seen as a door, or as a stepping stone to our goal.

Another subject: picking up something that Mr. Johnston brought out this morning, I added that if we are faithful to-day, if we continue to the end, working with at least something of love in our hearts, then instead of death meaning a break, death will be an approach to better and more perfect service. I want to ask you this: do you believe, *can* you believe, that members like Clement Griscom and General Ludlow and Julia Keightley—it would be easy to add other names—do you believe that those old friends of ours, our comrades, are no longer with us? I do not. I am just as sure that they are here at this minute as I am sure that you are. There are misunderstandings about death and the after-death states. Much has been given out, but much more could be given out, and perhaps some day will be given out, under this head. Yet there is no mystery about it. In the early days of the Movement, it was necessary for H. P. B., as we all know, to attack and destroy superstition, for superstition was rampant. When you died, if you belonged to one church, there was everlasting Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven; or Hell and Heaven only, if you went to another church. H. P. B. came along, and in one big explosion swept these aside as "Bosh!", and then told us about Kama Loka and Devachan,—and of course told us the truth. There is no doubt that the large majority of good people, who have had spiritual aspirations, go to Devachan and dream beautiful and improving dreams.

They reap their reward. Others who may be more materially minded go to one of the higher planes of Kama Loka. Let us assume that these are not so bad, and are just about what most people want. Some man, let us say, has been a very earnest worker in the Y. M. C. A. He dies, and then wakes up in the upper strata of Kama Loka. What does he do? Of course, in the nature of things, he goes on working for the Y. M. C. A. He gets what he wants. And we do get what we want. If we seek reality in this life, we shall find reality and live reality in the other world. We find what we seek.

To what did men like Clement Griscom give their lives and their hearts? To Theosophy and The Theosophical Society. You know that just as well as I do, most of you. Therefore, in the nature of things, they are working for it to-day, working for it probably far more effectively than the limitations of the body made it possible for them to work during incarnation. What is it that you would really wish as your heaven? I am not speaking of what you would like to wish, unfortunately—I wish I were! It is a question of what we really wish, and the trouble is that what we really want is proved by what we do from hour to hour. But let us assume that what we really want is to acquire knowledge of the Lodge and of our own Master; to be nearer to him, consciously. Let us assume that what we really want is renewed association, closer and truer association, with our comrades and beloved friends of the past—those who have gone before us. Let us assume that what we really want from the depths of our hearts is to do more for the Masters' Cause. If that be our desire, there is no power in the universe that can keep it from us; because we find what we seek, we get what we want, both in this life and in the next. We should not only carry that truth into our understanding of Theosophy, but should use it as one of the motives that is going to supply us with the divine power that we lack but that is obtainable. What do we want to happen to us when we die? Some of us are not going to live for ever, and we ought to be thinking about these things occasionally. It is not an academic subject. It is immensely practical and should stimulate our interest and effort, because, thanks to Theosophy, we have learned that man is the maker of his own destiny, is the master of his own fate, and that therefore we have the control of the situation in our own hands, able, to an appalling extent, to do what we will with the universe around us, with both earth and heaven, day by day. Whether we like it or not, we are building our own future. If that be true—and it *is* true—then why not do it deliberately instead of leaving it to chance, or to the mercy of our passing moods.

Your Committee is very grateful to you for having listened to its various suggestions. It has some more notes in its scrap book, but I think our greatest opportunity this afternoon is to hear from the many delegates, both from this country and from abroad, whom we have the immense pleasure to welcome. . . .

I am reminded that there are certain other resolutions that ought to be brought up, the first of which needs a word of explanation.

Some people think that the age of miracles has passed, but it has not. There is this horrible building going up next door—thirty stories high and an eighty foot tower on top of that. The noise of steel riveting goes on all day long, and ought by rights to have been going on this morning. Professor Mitchell volunteered for the task of asking that a miracle might be performed,—and it was. Two gangs of men, forty in all, were engaged for this morning's work, up to twelve o'clock. The contractor and engineer were told frankly that a Convention of The Theosophical Society was going to take place, and that distinguished guests were to be present, from Norway and Venezuela and elsewhere. The man was so impressed that when Professor Mitchell handed him a cheque covering expenses, he returned the cheque and would not accept it because they were glad to oblige The Theosophical Society! Therefore your Committee asks you to approve the following resolution:

Resolved: That the thanks of The Theosophical Society, its Members and Delegates in Convention assembled, be extended to the Hedden Iron Construction Co., and in particular to its President, Mr. A. M. Conneen, Jr., and its Chief Engineer, Mr. H. M. Ward, for the great courtesy and consideration they have extended to the Society, in suspending, during the sessions of the Convention, the erection and riveting of structural steel at No. 1, Fifth Avenue, so that the proceedings of the Convention might be undisturbed;

And be it further resolved: That a copy of these resolutions be sent to Mr. Conneen and to Mr. Ward.

(This resolution was adopted unanimously.)

(Mr. Hargrove, continuing) The other resolutions read as follows: First: that Mr. Johnston be authorized to reply to letters of greeting. Second: that the Convention authorizes visits of officers of the Society to Branches. Third: that the thanks of the Convention be extended to the New York Branch for the hospitality extended during the Convention. (Carried unanimously.)

THE CHAIRMAN: We come now to the very enjoyable part of the Convention when we may hear from visiting delegates and members. I shall call first upon Colonel Knoff of Norway, to speak to us on behalf of the Branch in Oslo.

COLONEL KNOFF: As a delegate of the T. S. Branch in Oslo, I have to bring you a heartfelt greeting from this Branch, whose members are with us to-day, in mind, heart, and soul. They were all very happy and thankful because this year the Branch is represented at Convention by one of its own members.

As to the details of our work in Oslo, our Secretary has reported to Headquarters. I shall, therefore, only make some general remarks concerning the prospects for our work in Norway. The difficulties are great. We have, at the present time, not less than five competing movements in Oslo. There are two very active associations, one representing the society in Adyar, the other the Anthroposophical Society in Germany, both having attracted some clever speakers. And recently we have also got three religious movements which are new in Oslo. One is the Sufi Order, which is the best of them, and then we have Die Christengemeinschaft, which is an offshoot of the Anthroposophical Society in Germany, and finally, the announcement of Krishnamurti as the coming Christ.

At the same time, there is a great stir in the minds of many educated people, a strong wish for religious and spiritual enlightenment; but this seems still to be of an emotional nature. In the Lutheran Church, children have, up till later times, always been told never to think for themselves about religious questions. They should only believe what their teachers and the priests were telling them about Christ; then they were saved. But at the present time a great many people revolt against these teachings. Some have turned away from religion, leaving such serious questions to a more convenient time; others have an emotional longing for religion; and others, again, are searching for truth, but, affected by the psychic bewilderment of the time, they are running after all that is new, sensational, or mysterious. They cling to what appeals to their psychic minds, and are often changing teachers, hoping thereby to find the truth without any exertion of their own thinking faculty. The uneducated crowd has to a considerable extent turned away from religion. They are materialists, the better of them socialists, and the greater part are at the present time communists, under the sway of Moscow.

There are, however, also people with a real spiritual aspiration and with tolerant religious views. I have, therefore, good hopes for the future of the Norwegian nation. After the present, more or less partial soul-eclipse, there will come a new time, with real spiritual sunshine. The main thing is to have patience, faith, and perseverance; and to work unremittingly for the Lodge. It is true that the workers are few and frail; but in due time the Husbandman will send new and more able labourers into his field, and then his work will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.

MR. HARGROVE: It has been suggested that it would not be right to let this occasion pass without speaking of what Colonel Knoff has accomplished in Norway. I do not believe that those of us who live in New York can have the slightest idea of what it means to live a long way off—as in Norway—and to work alone, without encouragement, with comparatively little support, carrying the burden of the work for considerably over thirty years. It would be impossible for me to express sufficient respect, sufficient admiration, for that wonderful achievement. I am, of course, only endeavouring to speak, once more, on your

behalf,—but also on behalf of the Society; because we owe it to ourselves and to the Society, with the facts before us, to do what little we can to convey directly to Colonel Knoff some sense of our appreciation and admiration for the work he has achieved in Norway for Theosophy and the Lodge.

THE CHAIRMAN: We hope next to hear from Mrs. Bagnell, the representative of the Norfolk Branch in England.

MRS. BAGNELL: When I found that it was going to be possible for me to come to this Convention, and so to fulfil a wish which has been the dearest wish of my heart for twenty-one years, I cannot tell you how glad I was. But I was much more glad when I realized that I was coming, not as myself, but as England,—because it is not only as the delegate from the little Norfolk Branch. When I happened to let other Branches know that I was coming over here, the letters that I received were of such a nature that, if I had not before realized the wonderful spiritual truth of Brotherhood which membership in The Theosophical Society implies, it would have been made absolutely clear to me.

When I came, I came with wonderful anticipations, and for the first time in my life my anticipations have been exceeded in a way that it is impossible to express. I am certain that others must feel this—certain because here we meet with something which is unique in the world: with reality. I do not mean to say that there is not reality elsewhere, but here we contact it directly. My hope is that we may be able to carry it away.

I felt so much the generosity of members who were glad that I should come, that I feel I am speaking not only of Norfolk but of England. We are only seven members in Norfolk, and we are never all together. Three are together. Two, I have never met at all. We study, month by month; this year it has been the *Ocean of Theosophy*. In August we study the Convention Report. I always find that that is the most important study of the year. The comments of the members, I have often been tempted to send to America. During the winter and spring months, we study the reports of meetings of the New York Branch. It would be difficult for me to put into words the great appreciation and gratitude of members to those who enable us to receive these splendid reports, and so bring us into connection with Headquarters here in America; for what every member values most is our direct connection with the Headquarters in New York. Without that, we should not feel that we were alive at all, and anything that adds to the vitality that flows between Branches in England and Headquarters is a cause of gratitude. In the autumn, I receive letters asking, "Do you think we are going to have the reports this year?" I always say I do not know. In the name, not only of members of our little Branch in Norfolk, but of other Branches in England, I should like most gratefully and warmly to thank you.

In England we sometimes feel that we have a difficult time. We are rather lonely, and are very few. Some of us feel that we are a diminishing number; but we have outgrown the illusion of numbers. However, we feel that we do so little in our little Branch. All we do is to follow a monthly study plan, write comments on that study, circulate the notes. Questions are asked and answered. We naturally try to live as members of The Theosophical Society would wish to live, and to bring that light and life into contact with those around us, but we have a discouraging sense that we do nothing. But the mere fact that we do study and report during the month, and at a given date write our comments and post them, and send them on to the next member, and answer questions, is not such a small thing as it appears at first sight.

Another difficult thing is that we are isolated. Sometimes the northern Branches meet—members and their fellow members. We, in Norfolk, are like a little blockhouse in the Sahara, surrounded by hostile tribes,—because, as Professor Mitchell said this morning, Theosophy is greatly misapprehended to-day. I believe there is no country in which it is more misapprehended than in England, because in England Theosophy has come to mean everything that is the negation of Theosophy. It means there something which is inexpressibly bad. If you mention to people in England that you are a theosophist, if they are kind, they will smile and think you are a sort of crank. If not polite, they gather their garments together in order that they may not be polluted by your touch. (That is not an exaggeration.)

It is an inexpressible pleasure to be here to-day. I come here with a great hope, first to bear a real greeting from our own Branch and other Branches in England. Newcastle wrote that as I

was coming here, they felt they were coming themselves. They said, "As you are going, we are going also. Will you bear our warm greetings to the members in Convention?" Another Branch wrote about the same thing. As I have come as a representative of England, I may be able to carry something back to England. I am so filled with the wonder and delight and privilege of being here that I feel it is impossible for me to go back and not take something with me. A two foot channel is nothing in itself—it may be only a blot on the landscape—but if it be connected with a lake or a river or a big canal, it can carry a certain amount of water to the fields at a distance and irrigate them; and I hope I may not be a blot on the landscape!

MR. GONZÁLEZ JIMÉNEZ (speaking in French): This year, there is not much to say regarding the visible work of the Venezuela Branch. A recital of outer activities, is not, I think, necessarily of interest. Our meetings have continued as usual, and the publication of our magazine follows the same initial plan and purpose. This morning, Mr. Johnston gave a brief survey of the history of the Movement, and in this respect we can say that *El Teosofo* has made that history known in our language: the Spanish-speaking world knows that The Theosophical Society exists—that our real Theosophical Society exists. This is a work of preparation for the future.

During the past year, the Venezuela Branch has occupied itself with special interest in the study of Christianity—a truly significant point—at the same time making a comparison with Buddhism.

Our Branch is, in effect, a corporate body in which there has always been a strong foreign contingent. Therefore, we think that this fraternal characteristic will be maintained, perhaps the more readily to deliver the work into the hands of future and better workers when the hour for the new outpouring shall arrive.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. González Jiménez is very modest about speaking to us in English, and yet we may recall that four times a year the magazine, *El Teosofo*, appears, filled largely with translations that he himself has made for the benefit of his Spanish speaking brothers,—translations not only of articles in the QUARTERLY, but from *Five Years of Theosophy* and the standard literature of the past. The work that he has done in making articles and books known, which otherwise would have remained inaccessible except in English—the labour of it—fills some of us with very sincere admiration. It is to him and his brothers of the Venezuela Branch that we are indebted to-day for these beautiful white roses (pointing to a vase on the Chairman's table).

We want next to hear from Mr. Box of Los Angeles. Some of us remember with great pleasure the last time—though it was years ago—that we had the privilege of having Mr. Box with us at a Convention.

MR. BOX: Naturally there is much that I should like to say but that there is not time to say, even had I the ability to say it. There are one or two things that I should like to condense, and in doing so, partly put my own feelings into words. From the very beginning, this morning, we have had admonition after admonition poured out upon us, so, if I speak personally, for myself, my whole body is bruised and aches, every inch of it, from these admonitions. But it is good for us! In trying to give a clear idea to myself of what they should mean to us, I recall the days before industry had reached the heights of productivity and the means for getting at resources and processes that it has now. In these days, the quality of the steel with which the automobiles, we now so luxuriously ride in, are built, is chemically determined. It passes through laboratory refining processes until a certain degree of perfection, of durability, strength, elasticity, and so on is obtained. Years ago, I can remember quite well, in the very early days of industry, when a good piece of tempered steel was wanted, the blacksmith would take a bar of inferior steel—presumably steel that felt something like we have felt at times. He would put it in a fire and very calmly blow the bellows, and sparks would stream up. After a while he would pull the bar out from the fire and smash and smash away at it on the anvil, and then return it to the fire again; and he would do this repeatedly until he got the right temper and texture in that steel, so that he could give it a cutting edge. For the process was a long one. He had to repeat and repeat it. When the steel got sufficiently cool on the anvil, so that it could no longer be beaten, he would put it in the fire again, then take it out and pound and

pound until finally it was ready to use for his purpose. It was a single article, not the mass production you get to-day. When finished, it was perfect steel.

These Conventions remind me of that process. As I listened to the speakers this morning pouring out these admonitions upon us, I could well imagine steel going into the fire and being hammered and hammered away. I saw one of the older members get up and pound away at us and sit down calmly; during the interval, if there was one, the steel was put into the fire and warmed up again. That is the process—between Conventions is the time when the steel is lying in the fire getting gradually warmed up, and then we come here and are beaten out. I imagined the Executive Committee, with those nearest to them, calmly waiting between Conventions, as the blacksmith did for the steel to heat. If only they could be so sure as he that we ever should get heated,—so finely tempered, so pliant, so willing but unbreakable, so fit for the Masters' use! . . . That is why I came from Los Angeles,—to go through that process.

In speaking this way, perhaps I echo the feelings of other delegates here. Mine is a very commonplace illustration, but it is forceful. Calling up the image of a blacksmith makes my illustration all the more forceful. There is another side to it: I have come all this way, to get the keynote of the Convention three months ahead. Of course, we do not really hear the Convention at the time. We have to listen inwardly to get the keynote. Sometimes we get a half tone, sufficient to awaken overtones or to get undertones, and by the time the QUARTERLY is out, we are ready to take it in better. But we do not hear the full tone until the QUARTERLY is published.

I should like to say what the keynote has been to me, because I have to take it back. We need it in our Branch work. It is one of the responsibilities I assumed when I left Los Angeles. I have to take it back with your help. All the morning, the speeches that the older members have made have been striking that keynote on us as an instrument. Without us as an instrument, that keynote would not be sounded. So we are all necessary to this keynote, every one of us. To go back to what the keynote has seemed to me to be: several days before I started, I visited the group of Spanish members that are now assembled in Los Angeles, forming a study centre of their own. I told them where I was going, what my intention was. Of course they had little idea of what Convention is—such a Convention as this—and so I had to give them some idea, some impression of what a Convention is or should be. I appealed to them in this way: most of you will be familiar, even though you do not attend church, with the Lenten season and with what should take place during the Lenten season, and what should take place when the Lenten season has ended. It should be the natural time of preparation for the inner life to come anew to each one of us on Easter morning, if we are ready to receive it. In the same way, our Conventions are an actual living expression of nature's own Easter. So I tried to make them feel from that illustration what the Convention is and should be to all of us here, and to them when I go back; and what should be the spirit that I would carry back to them.

This morning, you noticed the trend of the different speakers—the message that Mr. Johnston gave us about the door opening at the end of fifty years, a door, a way, practically to immortal life, open to us. It seemed to me that the Easter and Lenten meaning of the Convention was complete. The keynote seems to me to be the rolling away of the stone. There are its other overtones. One is faith; another is courage; another is sacrifice. Those three, we cannot do without. With those three, we shall do what we were enjoined to do,—call down "fire from heaven."

I should like to say something in regard to Branch work—the Branch work of the past. Doubtless there are some of the delegates who, during the past decade or less, have seen their membership dwindle down and down, until perhaps there are only one or two left, and it has seemed as though the end of things is coming,—and you went on and found that it was not so. You may not have picked yourselves up completely. You may not be where you wish to be; but let me tell you, if you are only one, there are two chêlas there, maybe three, so that the Masters can be with you. If there were two there, there must have been a chêla there to make the third—"Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." That you are here is proof positive that you have been cared for. Let us never forget that, that we are being cared for.

Another point is the difficulty of Branch work in the conflict of outside life that is trying to

pour itself in upon us at the present time. That is particularly so in Los Angeles. As to myself personally, very much disinclined to preside in meetings, very sensitive in the Chair (I would rather be anywhere else), I may say that in such moments I have learned something that I should never have learned in any other place and circumstances. We are told that what we are, counts. The work that we are enabled to do will depend upon how we go about our work in our daily life, upon how we conduct ourselves. Sometimes that is not apparent, but in Branch work it may become very clear to us in this way: we have members of other organizations coming to us; they had been used to being fed psychically in various ways, by various forms of psychic stimulus. They are apt, when they come in touch with us, to try to make their own glamour,—make the thing that they want, because they fail to see at the moment the real thing. The impact upon the Branch is the thing we feel. That is the test for myself and for my fellow workers in Los Angeles (say for Mr. Leonard, who works perhaps harder than any other member in our centre)—the great test for us—a common test—you may have felt it: such tests come! We were warned against dogmatism this morning, warned against many things that outsiders coming to us, bear with them. If we have any trace of dogmatism in our nature, it will respond to it. It is almost inevitable that in our efforts to deal with the situation we shall become dogmatic. The great work for us to do in Branch is so to purify our own lives that anything that comes from the outside in that way, falls dead at our feet. That is the source of strength in Branch work,—I may say the only source of strength in Branch work.

I should like to thank, if I possibly could, the older members in New York, and to let them feel, if only ever so little—I think they do feel it—they *must* feel it—our gratitude toward them. It is not that we feel lonely—they have looked after that. They do not often write us letters, but that does not make any difference; we do not feel lonely. As a delegate on behalf of Los Angeles, I should like to say this: Of course, I am supposed to carry something with me to give to you, and I am supposed to take something back. The only thing that I can think of to do and to give, is to renew our allegiance to those older members for all that we may be worth, all that we have in us, even our failures to live up to their expectations. And I want to carry back something of the love that stood back of the admonitions that we heard this morning; something of the fire that brought temper to the steel,—because that is what it should do to us before we break up.

THE CHAIRMAN: I trust that among the things that Mr. Box takes back to his Branch and is able to give to them from us, is our sincere gratitude for what he has brought to us at this Convention, from himself and from them. May we hear from Miss Evans?

MISS EVANS: I bring the very cordial and sincere greetings of the Denver Branch to the Convention. We have very little to report. We are holding our meetings steadily, fortnightly. We are a very small Branch, but we feel that our meetings are a great benefit to those who attend them. I think Mr. Box has spoken quite as much for us as for the Los Angeles Branch, and I shall try to take back exactly what he has mentioned. One thing has not been mentioned, and that is that from the small Branch meetings, we all go forth to a rather diversified field of activity, and while we do not get a great accession of members to our circle, we do get a great response and awakening to whatever of the theosophical thought and spirit we are able to assimilate and carry out in practice.

MISS MCCORMACK: I am pleased to say a few words on behalf of the Cincinnati Branch. We are endeavouring to hold together in the ranks assigned to us, and to carry forward the work of the Masters. We have public meetings and also a *Secret Doctrine* Study Class. The Study Class is conducted by Miss Hohnstedt's brother, and as Miss Hohnstedt is associated with her brother very closely in that study, I am going to ask you to call on her for that phase of the work.

For myself personally: I was talking to someone not allied with our Society, and was overjoyed to receive a tribute to H. P. B. A man I know had been reading the *Secret Doctrine*, and when he got through, said to a friend that from what he had read, H. P. B. was, in his opinion, the most wonderful woman the ages had produced.

MISS HOHNSTEDT: I think I shall have to start from where we left off last year,—the *Secret Doctrine* Class. We went on with it this year, and got as far as the fourth Sloka of the sixth

Stanza. One idea that we had in mind in having the classes was to impress those who came, with the idea of discipleship—really to live the life. We have not succeeded as well as we should have liked, but people tell us how much they get from our explanations of the Stanzas. We are so grateful to be able to do it—so grateful that the members want it. They do not want us to stop. We were supposed to adjourn next Tuesday, but three or four want to keep it up this summer, so I suppose we shall do so. I want to say how much the talks to-day have impressed me. Convention has always been a red letter day in my life. It means so much to me to be here.

MR. LYONS: I am afraid that Professor Mitchell calls on me simply out of his abundant charity—no one, however small, is to be forgotten. I was a member of the Cincinnati Branch, and what little I have learned of Theosophy I have learned largely from Professor Mitchell and Mr. Johnston. I also want to say that I had a great deal of quiet assistance from Miss Hohnstedt. I do not think you know what Theosophy owes to her, in her quiet way,—doing her duty every day and doing it as a matter of course,—seeing the thing that ought to be done and seeing that it is done. Up where I am now living, in the foothills of the Catskills, the few who have heard of Theosophy have an idea that it is a sort of spiritualist arrangement, with a Hindu fakir attachment. I try to remove that impression. I am heartily glad that circumstances made it possible for me to be here to-day.

MR. WAFFENSMITH: I can hardly add to what Miss Hohnstedt and Miss McCormack have said about our work in Cincinnati. I am certainly grateful that Mrs. Waffensmith and I were able to attend this Convention; it is our first, and I hope there may be many more. I am filled with joy to overflowing; it feels like a boy coming home. The members of the Cincinnati Branch are earnest workers. We have tried hard with the *Secret Doctrine* Study Class, and we are going to keep it up this summer. It has given us a better understanding.

MRS. ROSE: I wish I knew a foreign language, because English is inadequate—I want to say how happy we all are; and then I am dumb. Hope Branch is holding its own. We have our meetings twice a month, in the evening; and our Study Class; and we have the reports of the New York Branch meetings. Sometimes we feel that we understand them, at other times we are sure we do not; but we try hard and are grateful. There is an old hymn with a couple of lines that go, "The trivial round, the common task, will furnish all we need to ask." There was a time when I wondered what stupid, uninteresting, disagreeable person wrote those words, but in the light of Theosophy there is much in them that I need to learn, and I am glad I realize it.

MRS. LAKE: I want simply to reinforce all that Mrs. Rose has said—that we are trying to do what little we can in Providence, for to every one of us the Branch means the greatest thing in our lives. We come down here for the enlightening of our understanding, for courage to go on; and I am sure we are all going back with increased courage and with a better understanding, and with a feeling that, in a way, perhaps it is not so hard,—because it is just the living, in the light of Theosophy, of the little things that come to us every day. I feel that every one of us is trying to do it.

MRS. WAFFENSMITH: I am grateful for the courage I have received to-day, to go on and try to live the life, doing the best I understand.

MRS. REGAN: I really do not know what would happen if I could not come to Convention.

MR. DANNER: As I came into the room this morning, I saw that it was just about full; and someone said, "The family is all here." Then I thought of something that I heard just a short time ago, in an address: "There are lots of houses, there are lots of families, but there are very few homes." It helped me to realize that this is a real home. I look forward to the Convention as one of the happiest days in every year. It has been made doubly happy to-day by the presence of delegates from across the seas and from the West. We have known them by name, but now we may look them in the face and shake their hands.

I have asked myself, what is the Convention held for; why do the older members and the New York Branch take so much time to prepare for our home-coming? I feel that the thing to which they give most careful consideration must be,—what they are going to put into our hearts; how they can give us some personal contact with that reality which the Society in Convention wants to broadcast to those who are not privileged to come here. So, as delegates, we come,

not literally expressed) that I was coming to the atmosphere where Cavé writes, and to where the writers of the "Letters to Friends" are. All that feeling is behind my desire to thank the writers of the QUARTERLY.

A motion to discharge, with the thanks of the Convention, the Committee on Credentials and the Committee on Resolutions, was made, seconded, and carried. The Convention was then adjourned.

ISABEL E. PERKINS,
Secretary of Convention.
JULIA CHICKERING,
Assistant Secretary of Convention.

LETTERS OF GREETING

OCUMARE DEL FUY, VENEZUELA.

To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled, New York: Dear Fellow-Members: The members of the "Altagracia de Orituco" Branch have the pleasure to send to you the most cordial congratulations on the great occasion of your meeting. We are pleased to reiterate our loyal and firm adhesion to the Masters and their Cause, and request the Masters' blessings may descend upon your hearts.

Fraternally and sincerely yours,
ACISCLO VALEDON,
Secretary.

AUSSIG, CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.

To The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled: Responding to the summons, "Let us all make a new beginning," we contemplate ourselves and the tasks with which we are confronted in consequence of the circumstances of our environment, the latter having received a demoralizing tendency by the unhappy conclusion of the treaty of peace of Versailles. Being members of the German nation we became aware of the bearing of our responsibility to recognize the truth about our nation, about the war and its issues, and to wear out the consequences of our failure in the beginning of the Great War.

Anew we begin to prepare ourselves for the next run, which will be the final one in that cycle. We recognize with increasing plainness the generous and enduring support and readiness of our far advanced American fellow-members to help us in that battle, to provide us with power and force and to widen our consciousness, and we thank our leaders for that from the depth of our hearts. We bow down before the Masters—that well of power and energy—and we beseech and pray to them, as the custodians of that spiritual treasure, that they may incite our will to incandescence and may help us to embody their will into all our acts, to coalesce and to unite our will with their will.

Fifty-two years of The Theosophical Society! Entertaining that thought, we feel genuine thankfulness and stand in awe before our privilege. The summons of the last Convention, "Let us all make a new beginning," has an inspiring and an irresistible virtue. During the whole year we have drawn force, stimulus and encouragement from that watchword. We believe that when that summons shall be embodied from day to day, the vision of our loved H. P. B. will find consummation, i.e. that earth will be a heaven in the twenty-first century in comparison with what it is now!

With best wishes from all Branch members, I am,

Fraternally yours,
HERMANN ZERNDT,
President, Aussig Branch T. S.

WHITLEY BAY, ENGLAND.

To the Members of The Theosophical Society in Convention Assembled, the members of the Whitley Bay Branch send fraternal greetings. The date of the Convention marks the progress of time, but, what is more important, it marks the progress of modern thought towards the ideals and aims of The Theosophical Society. Slowly but very surely, the teachings of Theosophy are permeating the literature of our time, and minds seem more ready to understand and grasp the significance of that teaching. The past sowing of the seeds can be seen in the widening and broadening of many minds in their search for truth.

Let us therefore, as active members of The Theosophical Society, continue to sow, with our ideals held firmly before us. No member who holds these ideals firmly can fail to grow, and each having grown even in a small degree, all men can ultimately be lifted up, towards that ever present ideal of Universal Brotherhood. May the deliberations of the members be a step towards that end, is the sincere desire of the members of the Whitley Bay Branch.

Yours fraternally,

FREDK. A. ROSS,
President, Blavatsky Lodge.

CINCINNATI, OHIO.

To the Members in Convention Assembled at New York: Dear Fellow-Members:—With great pleasure I extend to you the sincere greetings of Cincinnati Theosophists. I consider the Convention a fitting expression of that great symbol,—the statue of Liberty, in New York harbour, holding aloft the Torch of Enlightenment to the World. "The enlightenment of Truth will set you free."

With kind regards, I remain

Fraternally,
GUY MANNING,
President.

GATESHEAD-ON-TYNE, ENGLAND.

To the Members in Convention Assembled, the Gateshead members send their greetings and wish you a good and fruitful meeting. We send our best wishes, and our thoughts will be with you during the time of Convention and you will have of our best.

Fraternally yours,

P. W. WARD,
Secretary, W. Q. Judge Lodge.

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA.

Dear Miss Perkins, We hold no meetings but are as firm in our faith as ever and wish to be represented in the meeting on April 30th. . . . Wishing you a profitable and most successful Convention, I am,

Yours fraternally,

MAHLON D. BUTLER,
Secretary.

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA.

Miss Perkins, Secretary: Good wishes to all attending the Convention. I hope they may carry sweet memories away with them that will be lasting.

F. W. BRINKER.

TORONTO, CANADA.

To the Secretary T. S.: Toronto Branch sends greetings and all good wishes to fellow-members in Convention assembled. While circumstances here prevent the holding of regular meetings, still a good deal of effective work is done, first by the effort to live the life and thus act as pioneers of Theosophic living in the different activities of daily life to which duty calls us; and then by suggestions as to where a satisfactory answer may be found to the problems of daily life, and by the distribution of the QUARTERLY. The QUARTERLY is splendid; we are proud of it, and know it must be very helpful to all who read it. If a suggestion may be permitted, some of us think it would be well if each number contained at least one article dealing with the elementary philosophical teachings of Theosophy, of which the article on "Karma and Reincarnation: A beginner's view," printed in the last issue, is an excellent example.

It appears to us that there is no better way of combating the present trend towards Socialism and such mistaken notions, than by placing before the people some satisfactory solution of the many apparent injustices from which they think they suffer. However mistaken the attempt to right things from the outside, we must realize that often good intentions underlie the effort—good intentions going to waste. There is so much strife and often bitterness among the churches, to say nothing of different opinions, that many are becoming indifferent to ordinary religious teaching and there is a marked interest being shown in any so-called new theories. Foremost among these is the idea of Reincarnation, the mention of which is to be found so often in newspapers and magazines, and generally in a sympathetic manner. The teaching of Karma follows naturally, and it would seem that members have much opportunity to encourage thought along these lines. It appears to us that a stranger, or one but little acquainted with Theosophy, looking through the QUARTERLY in a Public Library, would almost surely be attracted first to such an article as the above mentioned, and would thereby get some good food for thought.

With kindest regards,
Fraternally yours,
ALBERT J. HARRIS.

Dear Miss Perkins: Please extend very hearty greetings to the Convention for me, as I shall be unable to attend.

With best wishes,
Sincerely,
M. T. GORDON.

RAPALLO, ITALY.

To The Theosophical Society in Annual Convention in New York City: Greeting and renewed thanks for the knowledge and inspiration you have given me. Some months ago, I found and bought a book recommended warmly in the pages of the QUARTERLY—*An Introduction to the Devout Life*, by St. Francis de Sales—and find it a perfect treasure-house of divine wisdom. In reading it, I am reminded of the saying, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

Fraternally yours,
FLORA J. HENRY.

LA GUAYRA, VENEZUELA.

To the Convention of The Theosophical Society, Honoured companions: I write these lines in order to send to you my most cordial and fervent salutations, on the occasion of your meeting in solemn Convention on April 30, 1927, in New York City.

In order to share in your coöperative labours for the spiritual welfare and elevation of the world, I express my most sincere wish that Divine Providence may guide and illumine our

minds, in order that a more perfect and effective true coöperation for the ideals of The Theosophical Society may be happily carried out and maintained without relaxation.

Sincerely and fraternally yours,

J. Melitón Quintana.

Berlin-Wilmersdorf, Germany.

To the Members of the T. S. in Convention Assembled: We send our brotherly greetings and our sincerest wishes for a successful Convention.

The Convention of last year had most valuable things to teach us, and but recently did we finish the study of its record in the Quarterly. We are deeply impressed by its vivifying spirit, and feel thankful that by heaven's mercy we, as Germans, may so serve (as suggested by Mr. Woodbridge) that the world may follow the way pointed out by the Convention. We pray to the Master for wisdom and strength in order to meet the events of the future in the right spirit.

Our work here during the past year was chiefly built upon the study of older and more recent articles from the Quarterly. It has, as we believe, strengthened and illumined the consciousness of our responsibility towards the T. S. and our own nation. We are thankful for every help which enables us to see more clearly the situation of our nation and of ourselves, and we express therefore once more our grateful feelings for the unanimous resolution of the last Convention which can so well serve as a finger-post, and is built upon adherence to spiritual principles. With grateful reminiscence may be mentioned a very agreeable event of last year, i.e. the private visit of Colonel Knoff who has given us fresh suggestions and answers to our questions.

As in preceding years we will again unite in our efforts to identify ourselves with the Convention, to share as much as we possibly can in its spirit, its work and its light.

Fraternally yours,

Oskar Stoll,
Alfred Friedewald.

Berlin, Germany.

To the Members of the T. S. in Convention Assembled: We convey our hearty greetings and good wishes for the successful working of the Annual Convention. We express our thanks for the help that we were given last year by the Quarterly, the articles of which, from recent and also more remote times, were our subject of study during the expiring year. We feel deeply in debt because of many warnings in wartime, and regret the attitude of the German Branch of old, but see in the circumstances of to-day the serious duty and great opportunity of working in life for the victory of the cause of the Lodge. We shall try our best to realize the facts of history and to study the Bryce report which is commemorated in the Quarterly.

The fight is against materialism in moral, practical and theoretical fields. We wish to become by our efforts more useful instruments as privates of the great Commander, the Lord Jesus Christ.

With cordial greetings, we are faithfully yours,

Otto Ihrke,
Richard Walther,
Otto Bethge.

Berlin, Germany.

Miss Isabel E. Perkins, Secretary, The Theosophical Society, New York: With heartiest greetings to all present at the Convention: I hope and believe, that in the trials which I have gone through during the past twelve months, I have served in the Master's Work, and I shall not cease to use in our mutual labour the assistance which I have received.

that in the pages of this book I have tried to show certain realities of Chinese life as they have been manifested to me during the last quarter of a century."

The author is chiefly interested in the symbolism of buildings and their adornments, and the light which this symbolism throws on the cosmic conceptions of the Chinese; and, if we consent to forget the distresses of modern China, we may, as students of Oriental religions, find much of interest and value in the symbolism. Thus we are told that, according to the Chinese traditional view, the universe is based on, and subsists by, an ultimate Entity, the name of which rendered literally means the Grand Extreme. This Grand Extreme is absolutely immaterial, and as it operates in the process by which the material universe is produced in an invariable way, yet without intelligence and without will, it may be viewed as Law, as a fixed Order in which all the multifold and varied phenomena of the universe take place. This Ultimate Principle has operated from eternity, and now ceaselessly works, by a dynamic process in virtue of which animate and inanimate nature has existed from all eternity. This process is represented as pulsative, as a succession of active-expansive, and passive-intensive states; which succession never had a beginning. The Ultimate Principle, in its "active-expansive" operation, constitutes and produces the Yang or Positive Essence; in its "passive-intensive" operation, constitutes and produces the Yin or Negative Essence. This is very like the conception of Parabrahm in the Vedanta, with the eternal alternation of Manvantara and Pralaya.

Then there is a reflection of the Seven Principles: as in the region of cosmogony the Two Essences and the Five Elements are the source of all things, so in the region of psychology the Two Essences and the Five Virtues are the sources of all activities.

There are also traces of the teaching concerning Masters of Wisdom: "He who is enlightened, whose greatness we cannot fully know, is said to be filled with spiritual influences, which reveal to man all things transcendent." These are echoes of the past; the grim realities of the present are but faintly reflected in *A Chinese Mirror;* its author is a votary of "the goddess of coloured clouds." C. J.

Concerning the Nature of Things, by Sir William Bragg; published by G. Bell and Sons, London, 1925; price 7s. 6d.; also by Harper Brothers, New York; price $3.00.

Sir William Bragg has published, in this book, the substance of six lectures delivered at the Royal Institution, concerning the latest investigations into the atomic theory. The lectures were not intended for experts, but rather for those with little previous knowledge of physics. The subject-matter is of intense interest to a wide audience, comprising many grades of intelligence, from children to expert scientists, who are keenly alive to the value of bringing the results of recent research within the comprehension of all. Sir William Bragg excels as a lecturer, by his clearness of exposition, and by a method of demonstration which is all his own. He has realized the difficulty of making scientific phenomena clear by means of drawings, in a two-dimensional plane; he has preferred to illustrate his theories by three-dimensional models, in which large round balls represent atoms. The advantage of such demonstration is seen in the fact that a great number of arrangements is possible, with his models, provided that his audience realizes that the question of relative size does not enter into the demonstration. By means of these models, and by illustration from every-day experience, the lecturer has opened up new avenues of knowledge for many who had not previously enquired into the "nature of things." He represents Nature as the builder, working by ordered array, to produce an infinite variety of structure. Recent discoveries in the use of X-rays and Radio-activity have changed the method of study, and made it possible to investigate the inner structure of substances; and the knowledge thus gained, from within, is more accurate than the observation of outer appearance.

Sir William Bragg refers to Lucretius, as an early exponent of the atomic theory; but Lucretius was not an original genius, as he owed his knowledge to the investigations of the Greek physicists of the fifth century B.C. They, in their turn, perhaps had access to far older sources of knowledge; modern scientific research is but a rediscovery of ancient truth, and, in all ages, scientists have attained, by intuition, to knowledge which is now being proved by scientific

experiment. The atomic theory, when its significance is first grasped, sometimes astounds the intelligence by its sheer simplicity. The different atoms differ from one another in the number of their attendant electrons, and "the immense variety of Nature can be resolved into a series of numbers." There is modern science reinforcing a profound and fundamental dictum of Pythagoras! The atoms are acted upon by the force of attraction, which causes them to cling together, and the force of motion, which keeps them in constant movement. This two-fold aspect of the atomic theory is illustrated by Sir William Bragg in his series of lectures, in which he presents his subject-matter in the most delightful and varied manner, with a keen appreciation of the beauty and wonder of Nature, and with a sense of humour that cannot fail to attract the attention and sympathy of his readers. Recent investigations into the nature of elements, simple experiments from every-day experience, observations of common objects, at rest or in motion, all serve to demonstrate his fundamental propositions.

The last three lectures are concerned with the nature of crystals, a subject which is fascinating in itself, and rendered intelligible to the non-expert by the profound knowledge and brilliant exposition of the lecturer. X-rays have shown the actual formation of crystals, though scientists are not experienced, as yet, in this method of analysis. But it is a marvellous conception that the structure of crystals is based on a regular geometrical pattern, and with a symmetry of arrangement which is capable of a definite number of variations. The beauty of the different crystals, and their variety of arrangement, which has appealed to scientists in all ages, was the subject recently of some delightful articles in the QUARTERLY.

Sir William Bragg concludes his lectures by showing that, though much has been discovered, there is yet a whole world of unexplored material, awaiting research and investigation. That idea must prove an incentive to many who have scarcely begun their scientific career. Perhaps the two initial qualities necessary to successful study are enthusiasm and a spirit of inquiry, and it is just those qualities which are aroused and stimulated by reading these lectures on the "Nature of Things." S. C.

The Story of Philosophy, by Will Durant; Simon and Shuster; price, $5.00.

This book has attained an extraordinary popularity during the few months since its publication. Its sale proves that Mr. Durant has successfully responded to a public demand for a readable history of philosophy. It is interesting that such a demand should exist.

A rare collection of qualities must be present to ensure an *enduring* success in so redoubtable an enterprise. Some of these Mr. Durant possesses in good measure; but much is required to write a great history of philosophy, whether it be popular or not. History is the science of discovering and recording certain facts, but it is also the art of revealing the meanings beneath the surfaces of the facts. Thus every philosopher worthy of the name has been a true historian, in so far as he meditated upon the thoughts within the words of his predecessors, seeking to discover what they meant by what they said. Through meditation the philosopher gains the power to rephrase thoughts that are as old as the human race, to cast them in new and unique forms manifesting unsuspected aspects of old truths. This is that vital assimilation of the past which Bergson calls organic memory and identifies with the creative principle.

Mr. Durant has written many interesting pages, but in the opinion of one reader his book lacks the *élan vital* which alone can give it "survival value." He describes surfaces and not depths. Too often he seems merely to reflect the general views of "modernists" and "intellectuals." What he transmits is less the thoughts of the philosophers than the current opinions of the intelligentsia about those thoughts.

In other words, one feels that Mr. Durant has left philosophy not much richer than he found it. At the same time it must be added that his book may stimulate many to reflect upon problems of life and death which had never before occurred to them. S. L.

QUESTION NO. 333.—*By what method can the Secret Doctrine be studied most profitably? When I try to follow up a subject by the use of the Index, I quickly find myself confused. Is there a better way?*

ANSWER.—"All excellent things are as difficult as they are rare." But the difficulty and the rarity should be stimulating rather than discouraging. To study the *Secret Doctrine* is a great adventure, and like all romantic undertakings, it involves a long probation of confusion and apparent defeat.

One who is still a probationer can hardly presume to answer the above question in any specific way. But surely there is a general principle which applies to all our reading. We understand a subject by virtue of our previous understanding of it or of what is analogous to it. In other words, knowledge is a growing thing. If we be really interested in the Kabbalah, for example, and have a general idea of its main features, we shall inevitably find some illumination in the pages of the *Secret Doctrine* which refer to the Kabbalah. If we come to those same passages with despairing ignorance, we shall depart without much increase of wisdom.

Fortunately there is at least one reference in the *Secret Doctrine* to almost every subject known to man. Who of us is so desperate that he contains within himself no germ of interest or knowledge concerning anything? L.

ANSWER.—In reading any theosophical book, it is helpful to ask ourselves: "What do I know, from my own experience, of that which is being discussed here?" "What analogy can I find?" The universe is one, governed by one set of laws. Whether we are dealing with solar systems, atoms, or people, the same laws apply. When, therefore, we read in the *Secret Doctrine* about the creation of worlds, let us ask ourselves: "What, from my own experience, do I know,—not about the creation of worlds, but about Creation? What have I ever created, and what happened when I did it?" Many have had the experience of creating, that is building, a house. First a desire arises. Then it is seen that a house will satisfy that desire. A plan of it is made in the mind, which gives it form in the psychic world. Perhaps many plans are made and discarded, until one is chosen that seems best to express the purpose of its creator. Finally the plan is given form in the physical world, given a physical body of bricks, mortar, etc. When, after thus making a vivid picture from our own experience, we return to the pages of the *Secret Doctrine*, we shall find that light has been shed on what we are trying to understand. J. F. B. M.

ANSWER.—The student must expect to use *all* of his faculties in studying the *Secret Doctrine*, and particularly he must try to develop the faculty of intuition. The use of the Index is as necessary as it is in any other topical study; and if at times it seem to lead the student to information other than that sought at the moment, it nevertheless is certain to uncover valuable treasure. G. M. W. K.

ANSWER.—To some extent, the best method would depend upon the student; his experience in the study of scientific and metaphysical subjects, his habits of study—and the keenness of his desire to discover the light which ancient wisdom can shed on his problems. Eagerness and confident expectation go far toward compensating for a lack of scholarly facility in the use of books.

It is well to approach the *Secret Doctrine* with a sense of humour: little me, standing before one expression of the wisdom of the ages. Clearly I shall need to stand on tip-toe and to stretch up; clearly I must expect to proceed slowly, taking a bit, here and there, which I can make my own, and thus prepare myself to understand more. The Index might be more serviceable were it divided into two parts: Part I, a few major references, for those who want only the general outline; Part II, complete. As far as that goes, we could make our own simple Index, as we study, by underlining the page references that lead us to the general discussion of our topic—quietly refusing to be confused by other references that give abundant sidelights, turning away from these until we have partly mastered the abc's of the subject.

Some might profit by using Mr. Judge's *Ocean of Theosophy*, as an introduction to the *Secret Doctrine*. A. B.

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The Theosophical Society

Founded by H. P. Blavatsky at New York in 1875

THE Society does not pretend to be able to establish at once a universal brotherhood among men, but only strives to create the nucleus of such a body. Many of its members believe that an acquaintance with the world's religions and philosophies will reveal, as the common and fundamental principle underlying these, that "spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul" which is the basis of true brotherhood; and many of them also believe that an appreciation of the finer forces of nature and man will still further emphasize the same idea.

The organization is wholly unsectarian, with no creed, dogma, nor personal authority to enforce or impose; neither is it to be held responsible for the opinions of its members, who are expected to accord to the beliefs of others that tolerance which they desire for their own.

The following proclamation was adopted at the Convention of the Society, held at Boston, April, 1895:

"The Theosophical Society in America by its delegates and members in Convention assembled, does hereby proclaim fraternal good will and kindly feeling toward all students of Theosophy and members of Theosophical Societies wherever and however situated. It further proclaims and avers its hearty sympathy and association with such persons and organizations in all theosophical matters except those of government and administration, and invites their correspondence and co-operation.

"To all men and women of whatever caste, creed, race, or religious belief, who aim at the fostering of peace, gentleness, and unselfish regard one for another, and the acquisition of such knowledge of men and nature as shall tend to the elevation and advancement of the human race, it sends most friendly greeting and freely proffers its services.

"It joins hands with all religions and religious bodies whose efforts are directed to the purification of men's thoughts and the bettering of their ways, and it avows its harmony therewith. To all scientific societies and individual searchers after wisdom upon whatever plane, and by whatever righteous means pursued, it is and will be grateful for such discovery and unfoldment of Truth as shall serve to announce and confirm a *scientific basis for ethics*.

"And lastly, it invites to its membership those who, seeking a higher life hereafter, would learn to know the *path* to tread in this."

Applications for membership should be addressed to the

Secretary T. S., P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York.